



ATTENDANCE PRACTICE GUIDANCE FOR ESTABLISHMENTS

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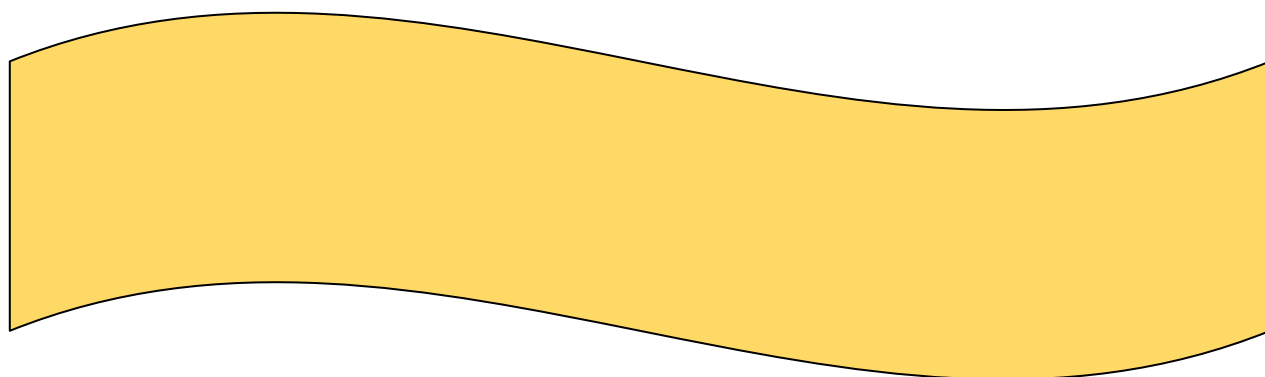
Aim of Glasgow Attendance Practice Guidelines

The aim of this document is to provide education staff and wider professionals involved in supporting CYP in relation to their attendance at school with a framework for practice. The document is not intended to be used in a prescriptive manner, instead the document is presented in such a way that allows professionals to navigate to the information they will find most useful. It is important to note that throughout the document the terms School Non-attendance and Emotionally Based School Non-attendance (EBSNA) are at times used interchangeable dependent on the source.

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Section 1: An Introduction to Attendance in Glasgow Schools



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School Attendance: The National and Local Context

What is school attendance?

The Scottish Government (2019a) defines attendance as participation in a programme of educational activities arranged and agreed by the school. This can include the following:

- Attendance at school
- Learning out with the school provided by a college or other learning provider while still on the school roll
- Educational visits, day, and residential visits to outdoor centres
- Interviews and visits relating to further and higher education or careers events
- Debates, sports, musical or drama activities in conjunction with the school
- Study leave for pupils participating in national exams, if arranged by the school during the period of the national examination timetable
- Receiving tuition via hospital or outreach teaching services
- Work experience.

Why is school attendance important?

The Scottish Government (2023) state that high rates of attendance in schools is a key priority of our education system and all local authorities have included attendance as a core stretch aim as part of wider health and wellbeing for the next three years.

Regular attendance at school is vital in helping CYP to develop strong foundations for long-term mental and physical wellbeing. In addition, there is a direct correlation between school attendance and achievement in education. It is reported that CYP who attend school regularly achieve greater success not only academically, but also socially and in relation to longer term employment prospects (Kearney, Heyne and Gonzalvez, 2023).

The Scottish Government (2019a) state that “attending school and taking part in learning wherever learning takes place is fundamental to making sure that children and young people (CYP) become successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors, and responsible citizens”.

Promoting School Attendance

Promoting good attendance is a multifaceted task that requires schools to promote positive relationships within an inclusive ethos and culture. Children and young people are more likely to be motivated to attend school when they feel fully included and engaged in the wider life of the school. Families are also likely to encourage full attendance where they also feel part of the school community and where schools work alongside them as equal partners. High quality learning and teaching, and assessment with a key focus on additional support needs is also fundamental to the maintenance of good attendance. Wherever possible schools are encouraged to involve and engage with community partners to ensure that CYP and their families are supported. Pastoral care staff also play a key role in supporting good attendance (The Scottish Government, 2019a).

In Glasgow, schools use a range of approaches to promote school attendance. The below information does not aim to provide an exhaustive list, and it is acknowledged that schools will use their own processes and procedures when responding to attendance, however, it is hoped this allows schools to become familiar with what is available to support decision making.

Nurture

Glasgow aspires to become the Nurturing City. Positive and attuned relationships are central to a nurturing approach. They are the foundation for supporting wellbeing and for effective teaching and learning to take place. Children and young people's life experiences are taken into consideration and care is given to their strengths and the key adults in their lives. A nurturing approach values the whole school community, and it is the responsibility of all to develop positive relationships and create a nurturing ethos. It is an inclusive approach that can be applied universally, benefiting all children and young people, as well as offering more targeted support for individuals.

Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)

GIRFEC is our national approach to improving outcomes and supporting the wellbeing of our children and young people. The National Practice Model is used by all agencies to ensure consistency across planning and support for children, young people, and their families.

[View information on GIRFEC from Scottish Government Policy Website.](#)



Figure 1: Display of Scottish Wellbeing Indicators

Staged Intervention

In Glasgow, the Staged Intervention Framework ([View Glasgow's Staged Intervention Framework](#)) guides practitioners in meeting children and young people's additional support needs. Staged Intervention reflects the fact that children and young people who face barriers to their learning and wellbeing require differing levels of support and intervention. Establishments use the Staged Intervention Framework for ensuring that children and young people have their needs met in an open, fair, and consistent way. Staff within education are already familiar with using Wellbeing Assessment Plans to support their assessment and planning for individual children and young people.

For more information on Staged Intervention, [view the 'Every Child is Included Supported' policy](#) (Glasgow City Council, 2016).

Whole Establishment Approaches (Stage 1 and 2 levels of intervention)

Educational settings can promote school attendance and take a preventative approach to school non-attendance through adopting whole-establishment approaches that promote children and young people's wellbeing and positive mental health.

As shown in Figure 2, in Glasgow, there are several frameworks and whole-establishment approaches to support wellbeing, inclusion and equality for all children and young people, including those experiencing EBSNA. Table 3 provides a brief overview of each of these.



Figure 2: Whole establishment frameworks to supporting wellbeing, inclusion, and equality.

Table 1: Description of whole establishment frameworks to supporting wellbeing, inclusion, and equality

	Brief description
JST / SIIM	<p>The LC-JSTs (Learning Community Joint Support Team) are an integral part of the staged intervention model at learning Community level. They allow for a collaborative discussion to be held and a shared responsibility adopted between those professionals involved in supporting a child/young person. This approach supports staff from Education Services, the HSCP and other associated partners to find the most inclusive local solutions to concerns about a child/young person's wellbeing to achieve consistently high standards of practice and provision.</p> <p>SIIMs (Staged Intervention & Inclusion Meetings) are a within education consultation forum. Again, it is a forum for a collaborative discussion about the Children and YP framed within a SOA approach.</p>
Nurturing Approaches	<p>Positive and attuned relationships are central to a nurturing approach and form the foundation for effective teaching and learning, and the development of wellbeing. Children and young people's life experiences are taken into consideration and care is given to their strengths and the special adults in their lives. A nurturing approach values everyone across the whole school community, and it is the responsibility of all to develop positive relationships and a nurturing ethos. It is an inclusive approach that can be applied universally, benefiting all children and young people, as well as targeted for individuals requiring more support.</p> <p>There are approximately 68 Nurture Groups in Primary settings, 20 Nurture Corners in Early Years settings and 14 Nurture Bases in Secondary Schools.</p>

	<p>Alongside small group Nurture support, Glasgow developed a policy 'Towards the Nurturing City' which set out a plan for putting Nurture and Wellbeing at the core of education.</p> <p>View Glasgow Educational Psychology Service Nurture Website Applying Nurture as a Whole School Approach</p>
LCFE	<p>Language and Communication Friendly Establishment is a framework supported by both Health (SLT) and Education to promote and deliver strategies and positive learning environments that encourage participation and inclusion for CYP. The partnership aims to develop the capacity of all education establishments to support and develop the language and communication skills of all children. Establishment receive mentoring and training throughout the process to become a validated LCFE establishment.</p> <p>View Glasgow Educational Psychology Service LCFE Website</p>
Solution Orientated Approaches	<p>Solution Oriented Approaches are strengths based and focus on identifying and using strengths to reach goals and overcome challenges. A broad range of Solution Oriented Approaches have been implemented widely across Glasgow schools. Solution Oriented Approaches are implemented at different levels of practice (individual child/family, school/ establishment, local authority) and aim to support a range of professionals to ensure children and young people reach their full potential.</p> <p>View Glasgow Educational Psychology Service Solution Oriented Approaches Website</p>
Restorative approaches	<p>Restorative Approaches encompasses a whole-community ethos, which works to promote and maintain positive relationships and resolve 'emotional harm' between two or more individuals. It allows all parties to be listened to, reflect on all views expressed, and arrive at a collective and agreed solution to resolve the emotional harm and move on.</p> <p>View Glasgow Educational Psychology Service Restorative Approaches Website</p>
CIRCLES framework	<p>Information is included within intervention section below.</p>
School Counselling / Mental Health Support	<p>Glasgow Educational Psychology Service (GEPS) contribute significantly to promoting the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people. The service has been working with partners in NHS GGC Health Improvement and Third Sector organisations to develop a range of resources and guidance for schools and early learning centres.</p> <p>What's the Harm training is offered to schools and outside agencies in collaboration with Glasgow Health and Social Care Partnership. ASIST training can also empower and support staff understanding when dealing with someone at risk of suicide.</p> <p><i>School Counselling:</i></p> <p>GCC have been allocated money from the Scottish Government to provide a counselling service to all pupils P6 – S6. The following</p>

	<p>organisations provide services to schools:</p> <p>Secondary School counselling and Group work – Action for Children</p> <p>Primary 1:1 counselling – LifeLink</p> <p>Primary Group work – Quarriers</p> <p>Primary Play therapy – With Kids</p> <p>Primary Art Therapy – Impact Arts</p>
PSE	<p>Throughout GCC, establishments engage and interact with evidence-based interventions to support the promotion of Personal and Social education. Such interventions include but are not exclusive to: PAtHS (Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies); Emotion Works; Better Relationships, Better Learning, Better Behaviour; 5 to Thrive.</p> <p>View Five to Thrive website</p> <p>View PAtHS website</p> <p>View Emotion Works website</p> <p>View Education Scotland website on supporting social, emotional and behavioural needs</p>
Loss and Bereavement	<p>GEPS, in collaboration with NHS GGC and Glasgow HSCP created a document intended for anyone who requires advice on issues relating to loss, grief, and bereavement. Sections include how children understand death at different ages, supporting children and young people with Additional Support Needs through loss and bereavement and the impact of peer help and social media.</p> <p>View A Whole School Approach to Loss and Bereavement</p>
How good is our school (HGIOS) 4	<p>HGIOS 4 is a key aspect of the Scottish approach to school improvement, designed to support self-evaluation and reflections at all levels.</p> <p>View HGIOS 4</p>

Data Driven Dialogue and Attendance

When used effectively data can inform and drive decision making in relation to school attendance. A range of tools and resources are available to support education establishments to analyse and interpret meaning from attendance data. Such tools equally support the ongoing process of monitoring, review, and self-evaluation.

Table 2: Description of Whole School Tools/Resources to Support Data Gathering and Analysis

	Brief description
Promoting Attendance: self-reflection questions for educational settings Education Scotland	<p>This resource was developed by Education Scotland (2023) to support schools to fully embed Included, Engaged, and Involved (Part 1)</p> <p>Improvement questions considered include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do our policies and practices promote and explicitly value good attendance (with pupils, parents, and partners)? Is our approach to promoting attendance inclusive and address equity issues?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How can partnership working with parents, community and family learning, and other partners, be developed further to increase attendance and manage absence? <p>Education Scotland - Promoting Attendance Self-reflection Questions</p>
Forth Valley and West Lothian Regional Improvement Collaborative (RIC) Attendance Self-evaluation Toolkit	<p>FVWL RIC have developed an interactive attendance guide to support schools to tackle attendance. This guide includes a toolkit to support effective self-evaluation.</p> <p>FVWL Attendance Self-evaluation Toolkit</p> <p>YouTube videos to support use of toolkit</p>
Education Scotland (2023) Improving Attendance: Understanding the Issues	<p>A report which is the result of a deep dive led by Education Scotland (ES) and aims to provide an understanding of the issues that impact attendance and how LAs (LAs) might support increased attendance and reduced absence with support where appropriate from ES and Scottish Government (SG). The findings should be used by LAs when considering approaches to improve attendance and reduce absence. Suggested actions are intended for LAs, ES, SG, and relevant partners.</p> <p>Improving Attendance: Understanding the Issues Report</p>
Education Scotland (2024) Supporting Attendance: Understanding the Issues	<p>These slides are intended to support leaders in schools and local authorities to develop their own workshops to explore how to support attendance. The materials are divided into three sections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding the Issues Effective use of Data Effective Strategies <p>Supporting Attendance: Understanding the Issues</p>

School Non-attendance

Terminology

Over several years, the language used to define children and young people who find it difficult to attend school has been widely debated. Early literature focused on 'school phobia' (Miller, 2008). However, according to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Health Disorders (fourth edition), a phobia suggests that exposure to a specific phobic stimulus almost invariably provokes a fear response (American Psychiatric Association, 1994). Kearney and Silverman (1990) highlight that this is not always the case with school avoidance because behaviours could be reflective of social anxiety or separation anxiety from the caregiver. Alternative language used within the literature includes 'emotionally based school refusal' (West Sussex County Council EPS, 2004), 'chronic non-attendance' (Lachlan, 2003), 'school refusal behaviour' (Kearney, 2007) and 'extended school non-attendance' (Pellegrini, 2007). In Glasgow, the terms School Non-attendance and Emotionally Based School Non-attendance (EBSNA) are referred to in relation to CYP who experience barriers to school attendance.

Prevalence

Post-covid 19 pandemic, school non-attendance in Scotland has been described as a system wide concern (Education Scotland, 2023). National school attendance rates are published biannually, recent reports show a downward trend in school attendance between 2020/2021 (92%) to 2022/2023 (90.2%) (Scottish Government, 2024). The Commission on School Reform (2023) report that national research shows:

- Nearly one in three children are missing an average of one day per fortnight.
- One in eight are missing a day a week.
- Nearly 20 per cent of high school pupils miss a day every week.
- And 2-in-5 miss a day every fortnight, including during the examination years.

Klein, Goodfellow, Dare and Sosu (2020) report that school non-attendance has a significant impact at both a societal and individual level. For example, attainment and achievement can be affected when school attendance falls below 90%, there is a higher likelihood of school dropout and a lower probability of going onto further education (Klein et al, 2020). In addition, CYP who find it difficult to attend school are at risk of poorer mental health later in life (Flakierska, Lindstorm & Gillberh, 1997; King, Heyne, Tonge, Gullone & Ollendick, 2001) and often have poorer employment opportunities post-school (Scottish Government, 2019).

Within Glasgow, evidence suggest that there has been a drop in children and young people's attendance at school over the last two years. Some of this may be directly COVID-19 related absences but it may also be linked to an increase in anxiety amongst parents/carers, children, and young people.

Sector	Total Attendance (%)				
	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Primary	93.2%	93.0%	90.5%	90.1%	90.4%
Secondary	90.1%	91.7%	87.8%	87.5%	87.1%

Table 3: SCHOOL ATTENDANCE - 2020/21, 2022/23 and 2023/24 - Source: Business Intelligence as of 10th October 2024

Kearney et al (2019) suggests that school attendance through to school dropout can be considered as a spectrum which can be used as an early warning system to initiate support.

Attendance Matters

Positive attendance at school is important to ensure children and young people reach their full potential and for them to have the best start in life.

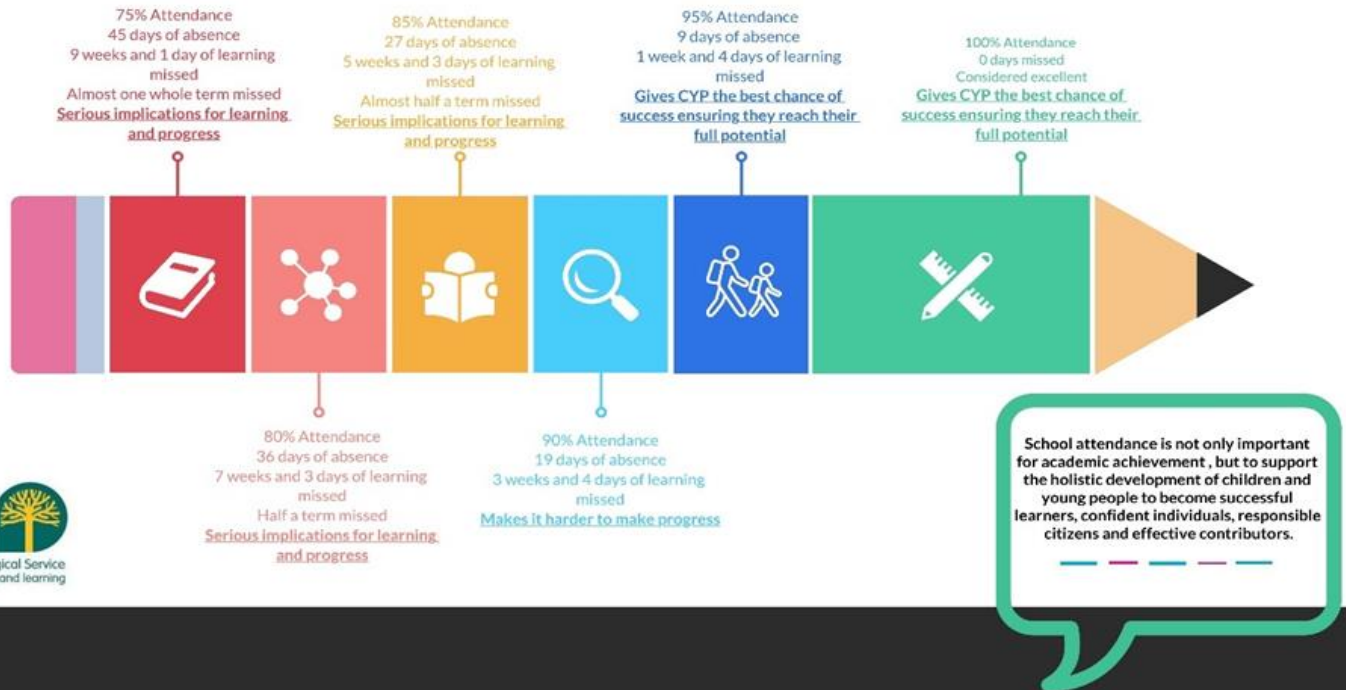


Figure 3: Attendance Matters Visual (Adapted from Kearney et al, 2019)

Determinants of School Non-Attendance

It is well documented within the literature that there is a negative association between low socioeconomic status (SES) and school attendance (Sosu et al 2021). This has become more pronounced since the Covid 19 pandemic and is further exacerbated by the current cost of living crisis, resulting in a much higher rate of school non-attendance in those pupils in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 1 and 2 (SIMD 1 and 2) and those with additional support needs (Klein and Sosu, 2023).

Not only is there a higher risk of school non-attendance for pupils with low SES, it also leads to greater harm in this group than it does for those pupils from higher SES with similar levels of school non-attendance. Of even more concern is the longer-term impact of these absences where the effects reach beyond school achievement and into later life (Sosu et al 2021).

In addition, Klein & Sosu (2023) in their meta-analysis research reporting determinants and consequences of school absenteeism highlight the following as risk domains to school non-attendance:

- CYP school problems (negative school attitude and low academic achievement)
- CYP physical and mental health
- Barriers to school attendance related to behaviour (risk taking behaviours, substance misuse)
- Family circumstances
- School factors (poor pupil-teacher relationship, negative school climate).

[Link to Klein and Sosu \(2023\) Determinants and Consequences of School Absenteeism](#)

Responding to School Non-attendance in Glasgow

Management Circular 05a – Included, Engaged, and Involved: A Positive Approach to the Promotion of Attendance in Glasgow Schools

This circular replaces 'Management Circular No.5: Children and Young People Absent or Missing from School and outlines the revised process for managing pupil absence and the process for children and young people missing from school. This circular seeks to position the promotion and management of good attendance and the prevention and reduction of absence within Glasgow City Council's Education Services priorities:

- Raising attainment and achievement through Glasgow's Improvement Challenge
- Continue to improve how we meet the learning and care needs of children before they go to school and as they progress through school, including how we support their families
- As we move towards a Nurturing City, continue to improve how we meet the needs of children and young people, particularly with additional support needs
- Make best use of our finance and resources to help ensure the best outcomes possible for our children and young people.

[Link to Management Circular 05a](#)

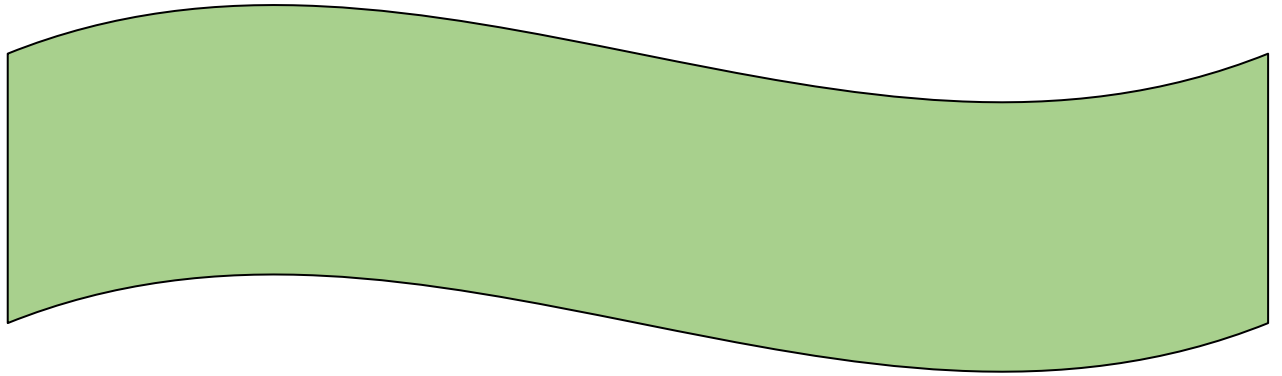
Glasgow's Attendance Multi-Agency Strategic Group

Glasgow's Attendance Multi-Agency Strategic Group is responsible for monitoring and supporting improvement of attendance of all young people within Glasgow schools. Members of this group provide ongoing quality improvement for all school attendance matters across Glasgow and aim to influence the operational delivery of the group's annual work plan. In addition, members of the group will be a point of contact in each area/sector for schools or other agencies to raise any issues relating to school attendance.

Figure 4: Overview of Attendance Multi-Agency Strategic Group



Section 2: Emotionally Based School Non- attendance (EBSNA): Introduction and background information



Section 2: Emotionally Based School Non-attendance (EBSNA): Introduction and background information

Introduction

Glasgow City Council Education Services, supported by a multi-agency team, is committed to ensuring that children and young people who are showing a profile of need which results in school non-attendance due to emotionally based factors (e.g., anxiety, issues related to Autism and neurodevelopmental profiles of need and mental health presentations), are planned for.

Two core structures made up of professionals from Glasgow Educational Psychology Service and third sector agency Quarriers have been developed to work collaboratively with Glasgow's Attendance Strategy Group to develop and embed a response.

Figure 5: Overview of EBSNA City Lead Group and Quarriers REACH



This section of the guidance has been written to support staff across agencies and services to provide a collaborative response to children and young people who experience Emotionally Based School Non-Attendance (EBSNA).

Emotionally Based School Non-Attendance (EBSNA)

In Glasgow, EBSNA is an overarching term used to describe children and young people who have a profile of additional support needs which includes a difficulty in attending school. This difficulty is often due to wide ranging factors which can include anxiety, behaviour related to Autism and neurodevelopmental profiles of need and mental health presentations. There may be other factors linked to the family such as parent/carers ill-health. For some children and young people, their emotional distress may be more obvious, for example, in their presentation at school or by significant levels of non-attendance. For others, their

presentation may be less obvious. For example, their attendance may be more sporadic, there may be specific lessons they can/cannot attend, or they may only be able to attend school when provided with a high level of support.

Prevalence

The development of EBSNA may be sudden or gradual and there tend to be peaks around key transition times for children and young people, such as the transition to secondary school (Pellegrini, 2007). Reviews have reported that EBSNA behaviours, with an element of anxiety, are estimated to affect around 1–2% of school aged children (Elliott, 1999; Kearney, 2008). Furthermore, school related anxiety is the most common reason for school absence in autistic children and young people. For more information [view National Autism Implementation Team website](#). It is important to note that actual prevalence figures are more difficult to determine due to inconsistencies and inaccuracies in recording (Nuttall and Woods, 2013).

Between August 2021 and June 2022, Glasgow Educational Psychology Service (GEPS) supported three learning communities to gather data in relation to the prevalence of EBSNA cases across both the primary and secondary sector. This was achieved through gathering case numbers within a framework of staged intervention, the learning community joint support team. Figure 6 demonstrates the prevalence of EBSNA across these three learning communities; 72% of all cases referred to the Joint Support Team experienced EBSNA which provides further evidence of this system wide concern within the local context.

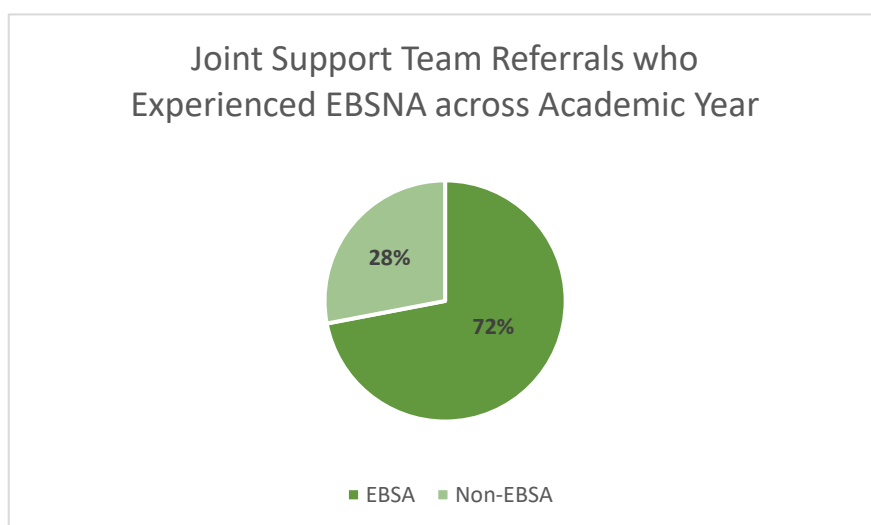


Figure 6: Percentage of Joint Support Team Referrals experiencing EBSNA across Academic Year.

Early intervention for EBSNA

When working with CYP who experience EBSNA, effective and early intervention is essential to promote children and young people's wellbeing and resilience, their educational success and to ensure they reach a positive destination beyond school.

Profile of Risk

There are often complex interacting factors linked to EBSNA. Some children and young people are at higher risk and early identification means they can be supported prior to experiencing EBSNA, preventing school avoidance behaviours from escalating or becoming entrenched.

To support children and young people at risk of EBSNA, establishments need to be aware of and responsive to early indicators or risk factors. The Profile of Risk ([View Profile of Risk](#)) is designed to be used as a 'screening tool' that can help when thinking about how at risk a child or young person might be for experiencing EBSNA.

The Profile of Risk can be used with all children, for example, at the start of a new academic session and updated as necessary so that issues with attendance and risk factors which may lead to the child or young person experiencing EBSNA can be identified as soon as possible, and early interventions put into place. Information sharing using the Profile of Risk, especially at key transitions points (e.g., P7 to S1), is recommended. When completing the profile, it is important to be as objective as possible and to base assessments on information. It is recommended that the profile is completed collaboratively. Figure 7 outlines the steps establishments should take when using the profile.

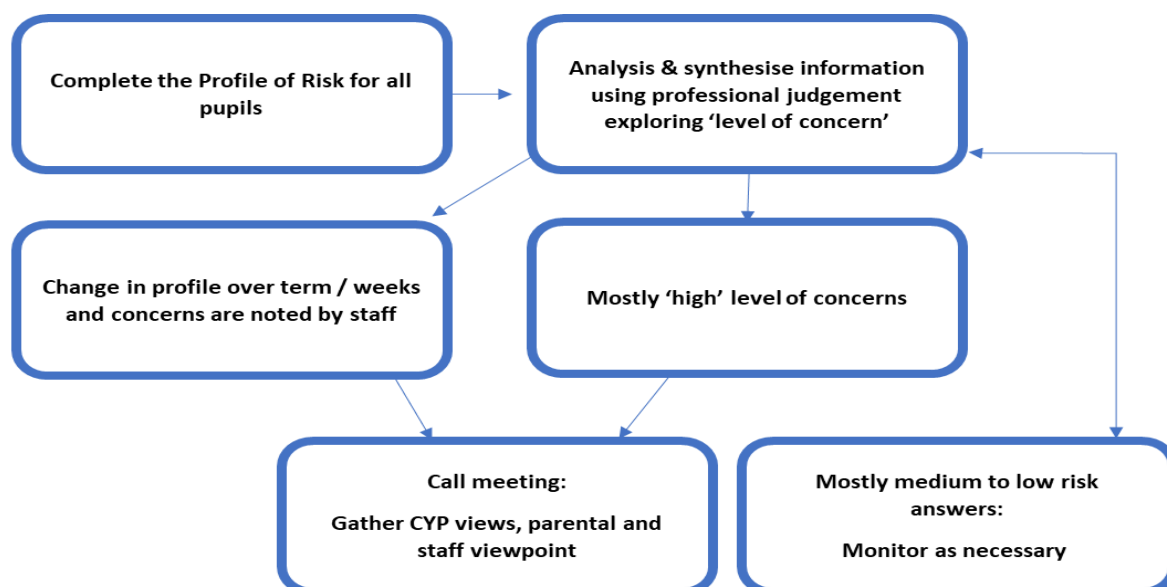
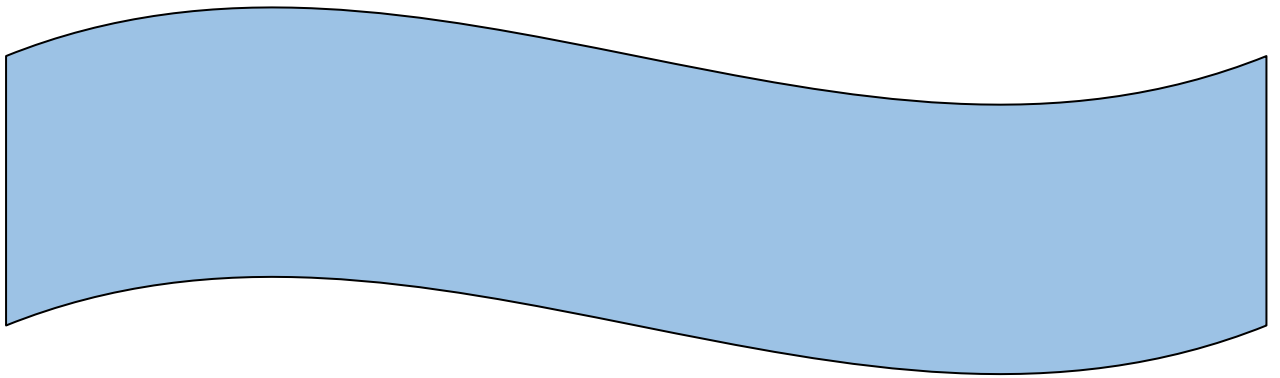


Figure 7: Process for analysing and responding to information gathered through the Profile of Risk.

Section 3: Theory and Psychology relating to EBSNA - Anxiety, Risk and Resilience



Section 3: Theory and Psychology relating EBSNA - Anxiety, Risk and Resilience.

Understanding Anxiety and EBSNA

Anxiety has been identified as a key feature of EBSNA. Anxiety is a normal and helpful feeling that we all experience. At a certain level, anxiety is a natural part of growing up, however, for some children and young people their anxieties are more severe and persistent heightened which can impact on their functioning, including their experience of school. Anxiety related to school avoidance may present as fearful thoughts around attending school and/or their ability to cope with school.

Physiological symptoms may be present for some children and young people (e.g., increased heart rate, changes in breathing, sweating, and shaking). They may present immediately before school, during school, the night before or even a few days before (consider children and young people who find it difficult to return after a holiday period, for example).

To respond to these feelings, some children and young people begin to withdraw to avoid the associated fears. For example, it may start as refusing to get dressed in the morning and over time can lead to not leaving the house and refusing to attend at all. Avoidance helps to reduce anxiety in the short term and, therefore, it can be reinforced.

Various factors contribute to the maintenance of EBSNA for children and young people. These can include worrying their friends will have forgotten about them, that they won't fit in any more or concerns about missing work and falling behind.

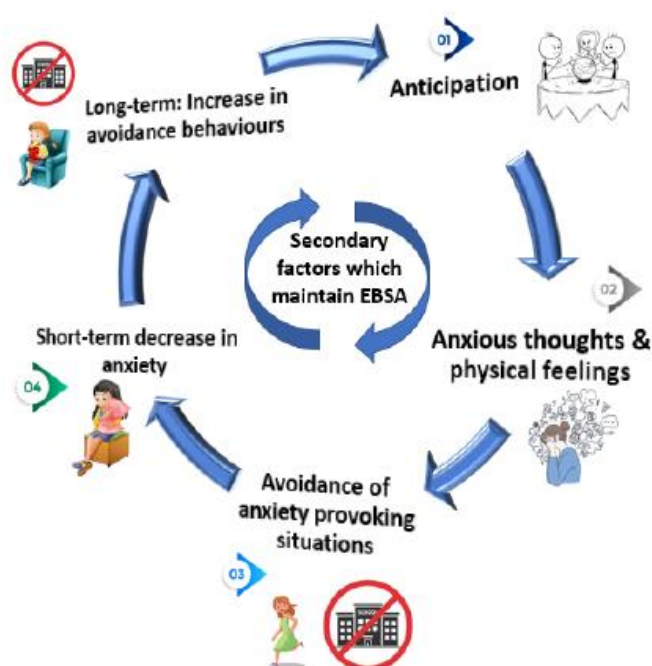


Figure 8: The Cycle of Anxiety

The cognitive behavioral model suggests that our thoughts feelings and behavior are all interlinked or connected (i.e., our thinking patterns influence how we feel). If a child or young person thinks they can't manage the work, they might feel worried about attending and going into school. Feeling worried can lead some children and young people to experience physical sensations (as described above). As these are unpleasant feelings or physical sensations, the child or young person might try to prevent or stop these by not attending school (the behaviour). This helps to reduce anxiety in the short term and the child or young person will experience initial relief as the anxiety reduces. In the longer term, by avoiding school the child or young person does not get the opportunity to test out their belief that they cannot manage work in school and are not able to discover that this might not be totally true. This, alongside other factors, can contribute towards maintaining the anxiety longer term.

Nuttall and Woods (2013) highlighted several primary and secondary causes which can impact upon a child or young person who finds it difficult to attend school.

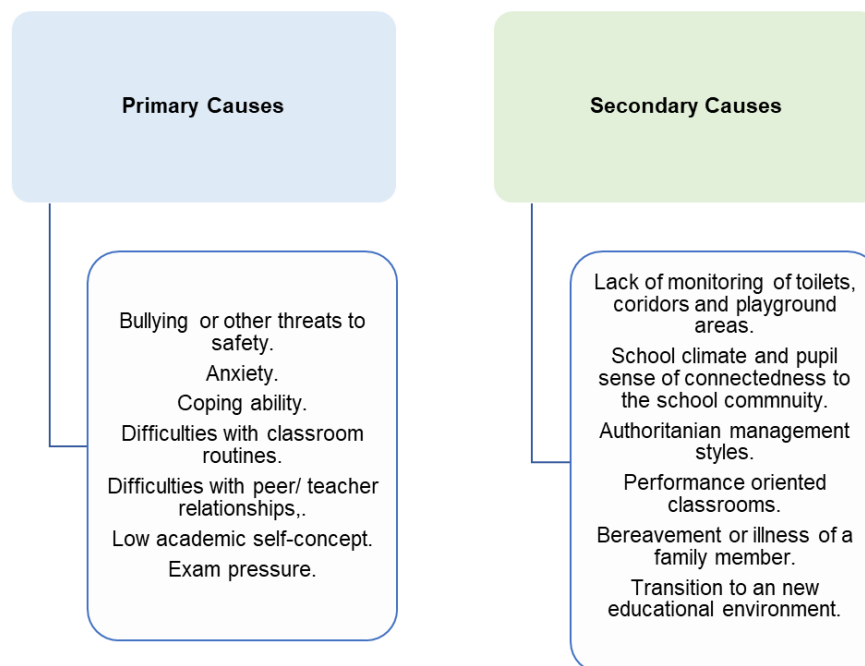


Figure 9: Primary and Secondary causes associated with school non-attendance

Functions of behaviour

Due to these causes, there tend to be four main functions of behaviour when a child or young person finds it difficult to attend school (Kearney & Silberman, 1990). The functions are outlined in Figure 10. These factors will either negatively reinforce (the blue and green boxes) or positively reinforce (the grey and orange boxes) EBSNA. Therefore, they can be influential in maintaining patterns of non-attendance. In practice, it is important to remember that these functions are likely interlinked and may operate simultaneously.

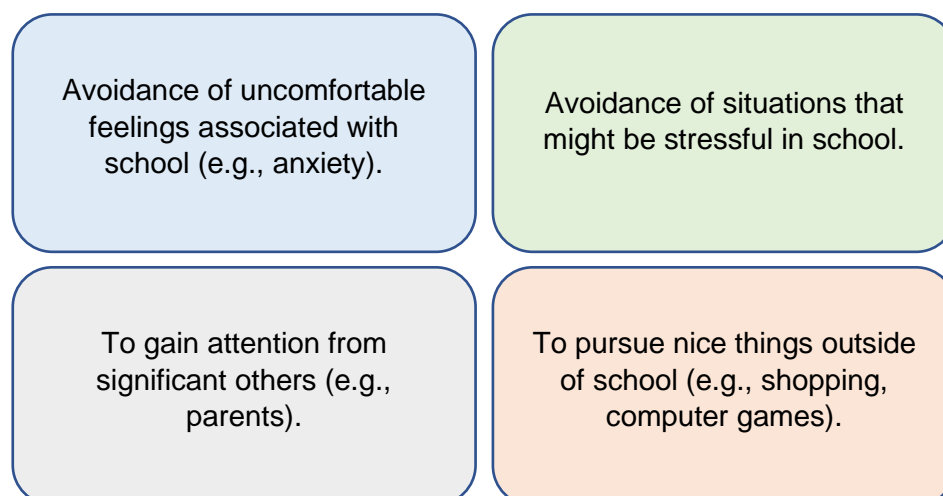


Figure 10: Four main functions of non-attendance behaviour.

Ecological Systems Theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979)

EBSNA is complex and there are likely to be various interlinked factors as to why a child or young person might be finding it difficult to attend school. Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological approach highlights that individuals do not develop in isolation, but rather in the context of the systems that surround them. When attempting to understand the development of a child or young person, it is important to consider them and their needs within the context of multiple environments. Bronfenbrenner referred to these as ecological systems, or spheres of influence (see Figure 6). A child's development, and subsequent outcomes, are a mix of within-child, family, school, and community factors. Inherent qualities of a child and their environment interact with each other, influencing how that child grows and develops.

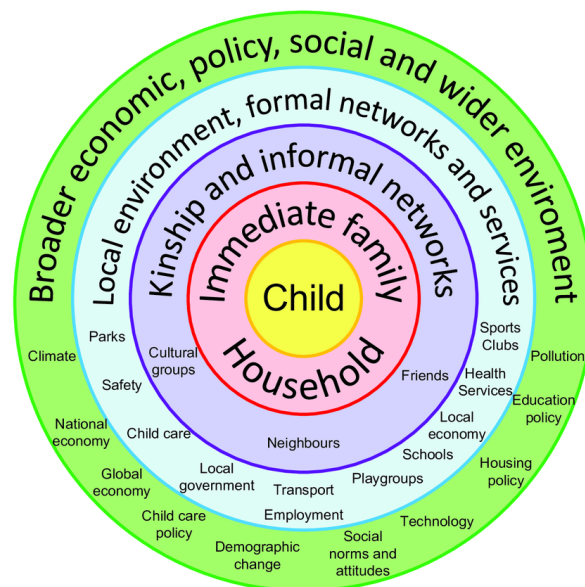


Figure 11: Bronfenbrenner's (1979) Ecological Systems Theory

Our National Practice Model (GIRFEC) provides a perfect example of ecological theory applied to practice. This collaborative approach to assessment and planning for children and young people is used across all agencies and encourages all stakeholders to gain a shared perspective of the child/young person's needs. It involves consideration of risk and protective/resilience factors at the various levels and the interaction between these. It also considers the role of professionals and the supports/services available to children, young people, and their families.

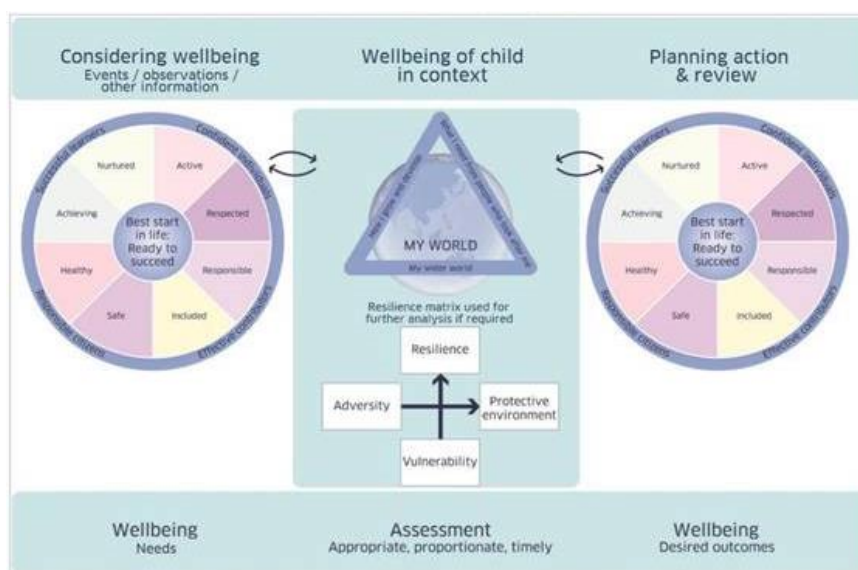
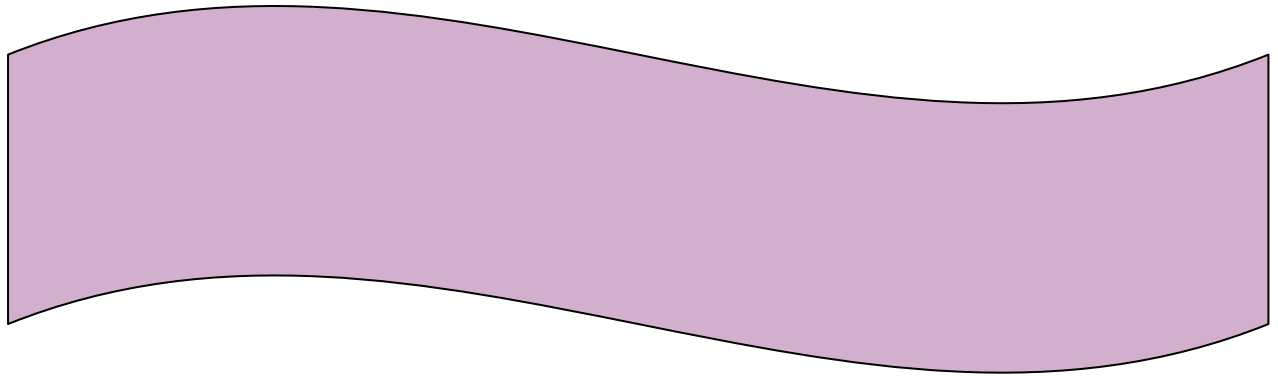


Figure 12: The National Practice Model (GIRFEC)

Section 4: Information Gathering and Assessment within a Framework of Staged Intervention



Section 4: Information Gathering and Assessment within a Framework of Staged Intervention.

Both Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological model and the National Practice Framework (GIRFEC) align with theory and literature relating to best practice to support children and young people who find it difficult to attend school. It is important that we recognise that children and young people's barriers to attending school do not operate exclusively, but instead simultaneously. As such, we need to understand each child and young person through early intervention and effective assessment and information gathering to ensure best practices to inform planning and supports. Each child and young person's situation will be unique and will need an individual and personalised plan.

Staged Intervention – EBSNA

Figure 13 provides an example of the staged intervention framework in relation to EBSNA.

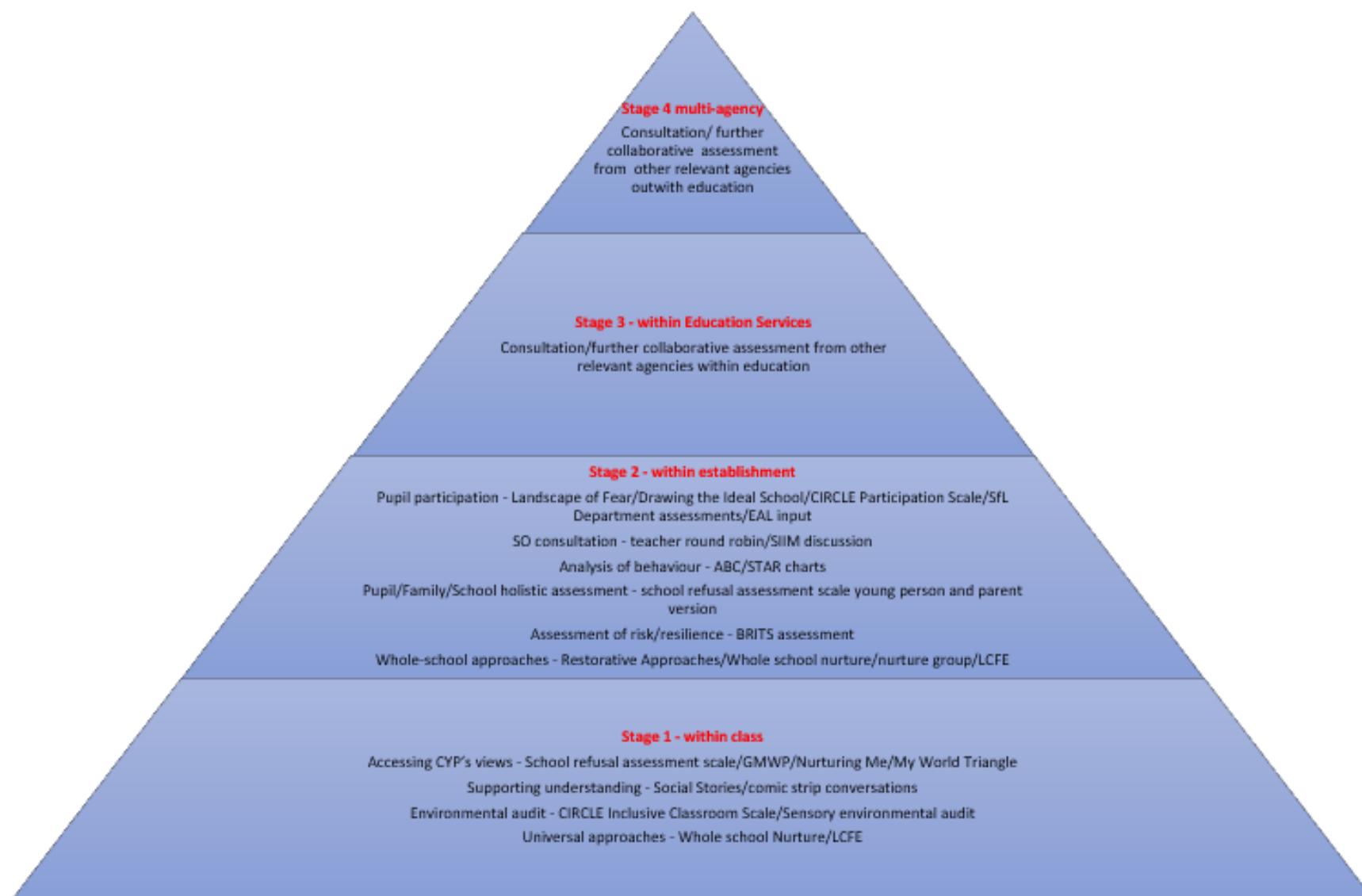


Figure 13: An example of the staged intervention framework in relation to EBSNA.

Information Gathering and Assessment - EBSNA

Information gathering and assessment is critical when working with children and young people who experience EBSNA. The literature indicates that children and young people are more likely to experience EBSNA when the risks are greater than resilience, when stress and anxiety exceeds support, and when factors that promote school avoidance 'overwhelm' the factors that encourage school attendance (Nuttall and Woods, 2013).

As with our approach to assessment in Glasgow, when supporting individuals experiencing EBSNA, it is also important to identify and build upon areas of strength or resilience at the school, family and CYP level. These factors may help to 'protect' the child or young person and promote school attendance.

Keeping theory in mind, it is helpful to consider risk and protective factors at different ecological levels when gathering information in response to children and young people who experience EBSNA. Table 4 provides a summary of key risk and resilience factors often associated with EBSNA.

Table 4: Risk and resilience factors associated with EBSNA

Ecological level	Risk factors	Protective (resilience) factors
Education and community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bullying • Key transitions (e.g., P7-S1, change of school) • Academic demands • Journey to school • Exams • Peer relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive relationships with staff • Friendships • Subject interest • Flexibility of approaches within school • Creating opportunities for success • Partnership working
Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parental separation/divorce • Parental mental health • Loss and bereavement • High levels of family stress • Poverty • Young carer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good family support network/extended family members • Developing parental understanding and building their skills
Child/Young person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fear of failure/low self-esteem • Age (4-5, 11-12 & 14-15 years) • Separation anxiety • Traumatic experiences • Autistic • Learning/communication differences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivated to achieve a future goal/career • Keen to learn • Positive experiences • Feeling listened to and understood • Understanding the relationship between thoughts, feelings and behaviours

There are several different tools and resources we can use to support our assessment process and information gathering to inform future intervention. These can be considered at the both the individual child or young person and environmental/community levels.

Consulting with Children and Young People

When working with CYP who experience EBSNA a central part of your assessment is making sure you have spoken and listened to the child or young person and their views on the current situation and their wellbeing. There are several ways of doing this as outlined in Table 5.

The [Glasgow Guidance for the Meaningful Involvement of Children and Young People in Decision Making](#) uses the Lundy Model (2007) and the elements of Space, Voice, Audience as a children's right-based approach to gathering pupil voice. This helpful tool can aid thinking in relation to meaningfully involving CYP in decision that affect them and should be considered alongside the below resources.

Table 5: Recommended tools for consulting with children and young people.

Tools	Description	When might it be useful to use this?
GMWP	<p>The Glasgow Motivation and Wellbeing Profile (GMWP) is a questionnaire that explores young person's wellbeing and sense of motivation in the learning context. 50 item or 20 item questionnaires are available.</p> <p>A 20-item version with Boardmaker symbols can be printed and used with young people who would benefit from the use of visuals.</p> <p>A desired outcome could be discussed following on from the information elicited. It may be useful to add this and information from the strengths, issues and actions identified in the planning sheet in the SOA grid or WAP.</p> <p>Access the GMWP tool.</p> <p>Password: gmwp</p>	<p>The 50- item version is recommended for use with 8-17 years old.</p> <p>The 20-item version is similar to the 50-item version but only contains 20 all positive statements. This may be useful when it is thought that the young person may not be able to complete the 50-item version with support.</p> <p>It is important to read the guide on how to use this tool to facilitate a meaningful discussion, completing all parts of the GMWP.</p>
Nurturing Me	<p>'Nurturing Me' is a GIRFEC tool which captures the voice of the child. The main purpose is to allow the child to have their voice heard in relation to their perspective on their wellbeing. It is a mediated tool using concrete materials which allows children and young people to identify key people in their lives alongside the child's perspective on the closeness and importance of that relationship.</p>	<p>This tool can be used with pre-school to primary aged children.</p> <p>Aspects from this can be easily mapped onto the SOA grid.</p>

	<p>Access Nurturing Me guidance and materials.</p> <p>Password: gmwp</p> <p>Access Nurturing Me on Apple Store</p>	
My World Triangle	<p>As part of the National Practice Model, the 'My World Triangle' enables practitioners to assess wellbeing concerns in all aspects of a child's life. It also considers their strengths which can be organised around the triangle and can be used interactively. It examines the key areas of the child's circumstances under the headings: 'how I grow and develop', 'my wider world', 'what I need from people who look after me.'</p> <p>Access interactive my world triangle.</p>	<p>This tool can be used with pre-school to secondary aged children and families.</p> <p>The approach can be adapted to suit the abilities of a range of children.</p>
School Refusal Assessment Scale	<p>The School Refusal Assessment Scale-Revised (SRAS-R), developed by Christopher Kearney and Wendy Silverman, is a psychological assessment tool designed to help evaluate why children and young people may be finding it difficult to attend school. It is a self-report inventory and there are versions available which can be completed by the child or young person, parents/carers and school staff. It consists of 24 questions that measure the frequency with which a child experiences emotions and behaviours related to school attendance.</p> <p>The questionnaire takes about 10 minutes to complete.</p> <p>Access the school refusal assessment scale.</p> <p>Password: EBSNA2022</p>	<p>Designed for use with children ages 5+.</p> <p>To gather the views of the child/young person and parent/carer in relation to factors affecting a young person's ability to attend school.</p>
Strength Cards	<p>Strength cards are a set of illustrated cards which can be used creatively to access children and young people's views of their strengths. There are 54 cards each depicting a different strength.</p> <p>St Lukes Innovative Resources info@innovativeresources.org Purchase from Incentive Plus www.incentiveplus.co.uk ISBN 978-1-920945-305</p>	<p>The cards can be used with pre-school to secondary aged children.</p> <p>Fit well with a solution-oriented approach looking at strengths and resiliencies.</p> <p>Can be used in tandem with Bear cards</p>

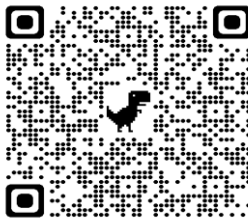
Bear Cards	<p>A set of 48 cards each depicting a bear expressing different emotions and personalities.</p> <p>St Lukes Innovative Resources info@innovativeresources.org Purchase from Incentive Plus www.incentiveplus.co.uk tel:01908 526120 ISBN 1-8756507-9-2</p>	<p>The cards can be used with pre-school to secondary aged children.</p> <p>Of particular use with children and young people who don't want to talk and can use the cards to express insights into their relationships, families, and school experience.</p> <p>Can also be used as a conversation starter and in conjunction with Strength cards</p>
A Therapeutic Treasure Deck of Sentence Completion and Feelings cards	<p>A set 68 cards with conversation starters. Half the cards are sentence completion, and the other half are feelings cards. Can be used separately or together.</p> <p>Jessica Kingsley Publishers ISBN 978-1-78592-398-2 www.jkp.com</p>	<p>For use with primary and secondary aged pupil. Provides a safe and playful way to help children and young people express feelings, thoughts and experiences.</p>

Gathering information about the environment and/or community

To provide a robust assessment, it is essential that you gather assessment information at the environment and community level as well as at the individual level. There are several ways of doing this, outlined in Table 6.

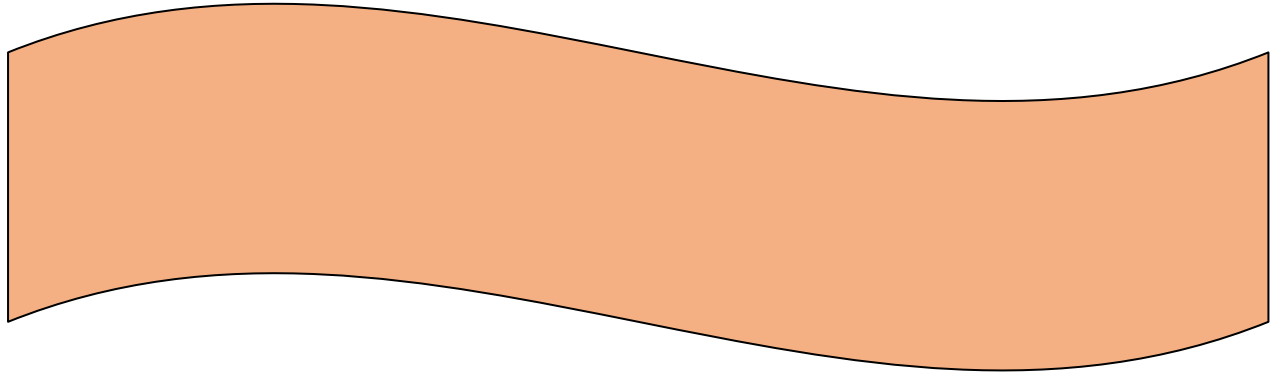
Table 6: Recommended tools for gathering information at the environment and community level

Tools	Description	When might it be useful to use this?
CIRCLE Framework (Inclusive Classroom Scale)	<p>This resource provides practical strategies to support the underlying skills that pupils require to enable them to participate in school. The CIRCLE Framework is a way of organising and supporting input using a staged system of support, beginning with setting up an inclusive classroom. Checklists and planning tools are included to support discussion and can be used to document strategies used and record professional learning. It includes the CIRCLE Inclusive Classroom Scale and the CIRCLE Participation Scale developed with practitioners to support the measurement of progress.</p> <p>It begins by considering whole school approaches to inclusion. Using a staged system of intervention, it builds</p>	<p>These resources strengthen a whole school approach to improving inclusive practice but can also be used by individual practitioners improving their classroom setting or their approach to supporting and individual learner.</p>

	<p>on the solid foundation of an inclusive classroom and then moves on to identifying learners' strengths and support needs, giving suggestions of practical supports and strategies. It also provides information to support collaborative working with partner services and agencies, and parents/carers.</p> <p>For secondary practitioners there is an accompanying professional learning module which allows the CIRCLE resource to be explored in more depth.</p> <p>Access the CIRCLE guidance and resource.</p>	
My World Triangle	<p>As part of the National Practice Model, the 'My World Triangle' enables practitioners to assess wellbeing concerns in all aspects of a child's life. It also considers their strengths which can be organised around the triangle and can be used interactively. It examines the key areas of the child's circumstances under the headings: 'how I grow and develop', 'my wider world', 'what I need from people who look after me.'</p> <p>Access interactive my world triangle.</p>	<p>This tool can be used with pre-school to secondary aged children and families.</p> <p>The approach can be adapted to suit the abilities of a range of children.</p>
Mapping the Landscape	<p>Mapping the Landscape for children in school can be divided into three domains.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The physical environment • The social environment • The learning environment <p>Pupils are asked to look at a map of their school and categorise areas into red, yellow and green depending on how anxious or calm a space makes them feel.</p> <p>There are accompanying questionnaires which helps the pupil map their landscape of fear along with supplementary questions focused on how to make the red areas feel safer. There is a student and staff version which covers all three domains.</p> <p>Mapping the Landscape and the accompanying questionnaires can be found in: 'Autism from Diagnostic Pathway to Intervention' by Kate Ripley (pp. 115-157).</p> <p>View Autism from Diagnostic Pathway to Intervention on Amazon.</p>  <p>Mapping the Landscape can also be accessed via Lancashire EBSA Guidance (Pages 34-40)</p> <p>Lancashire EBSA Guidance</p>	<p>This can be used to help identify which aspects of school life are causing the most anxiety for pupils in school. It can then be used to come up with solutions to make those aspects feel safer.</p>

Sensory Environmental Audit	<p>This sensory audit is to help staff to assess and create an environment that enables the participation of young people with sensory sensitivities. It does not cover all aspects but gives ideas on the ways in which a setting might be altered if a young person experiences sensory processing difficulties and finds it hard or very anxiety-provoking to tolerate certain sensations or situations. Once completed, the results help to identify areas of strength and areas to develop that will make the environment more inclusive and should feed into a plan, do, review cycle. EPs can support with any analysis of this tool/consideration of next steps.</p> <p>View Sensory Audit Tool for Schools and Classrooms</p> <p>This resource can be used in partnership with the KIDS Scotland sensory profiling questionnaires.</p> <p>Access KIDS Scotland website.</p>	Practitioners who want to consider different sensory aspects of the playroom/classroom environment and how these impact on learners.
Round Robin	<p>The Round Robin Template is a way of accessing the views of all staff involved with a young person. It has a focus on strengths and what is going well so that strategies which have been successfully can be used elsewhere.</p> <p>View Solution Oriented Round Robin</p>	Helps to gather relevant information from subject teachers to support with your assessment and planning. This can be particularly useful within the secondary school context.
Solution Oriented Meetings and Questioning	<p>Using a solution-oriented meeting structure along with solution-oriented questioning is a valuable tool in ensuring you have all the information you need. It helps with the analysis of the information and formulating a plan.</p> <p>View Solution Oriented Meeting Structure</p>	This is of particular use when you are at the planning stage of your 'Assess/ Plan/ Do /Review' cycle. This should be done collaboratively and involve the child or young person, parent/carer, and key adults.
Drawing the Ideal school	<p>This is a structured drawing technique based on personal construct theory. With the support of a trusted adult, the young person is asked to draw the kind of school they would not like to go to and then the ideal school they would like to go to. The conversation as the young person draws is guided by the trusted adult.</p> <p>Access guidance for the Drawing the Ideal School technique.</p>	This resource can be used with a wide range of ages. The guide is for parents/carers to use with their child/young person but could also be used by school staff.

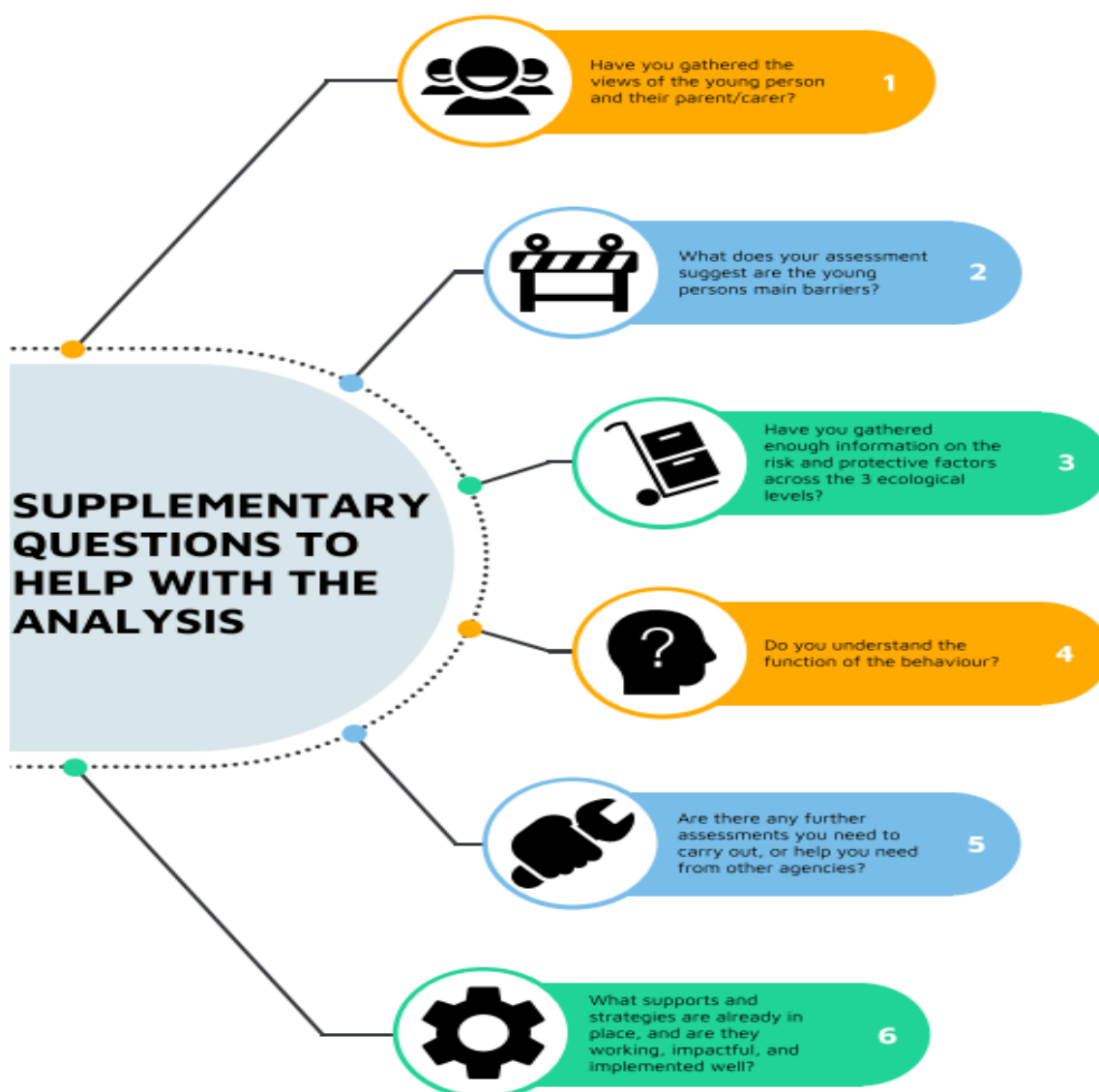
Section 5: Making Sense of Assessment Information



Section 5: Making Sense of Assessment Information.

What does the assessment information gathered tell you? There are some key questions which will help with this analysis. The GIRFEC 'five key questions' are a helpful starting point to do this.

- What can I do now to help this child or young person?
- What is getting in the way of this child or young person's wellbeing?
- What additional help if any may be needed from others?
- Do I have all the information I need to help this child or young person?
- What can my service do to help this child or young person?



With thanks to S5 interns from Career Ready Mentoring Programme 2022 for designing this infographic.

Figure 14: Supplementary questions to help with analysing assessment information

Planning

Following this analysis, it can be helpful to use a solution-oriented structure to collate your assessment information and think about how this will inform planning. This should be done in preparation for a solution-oriented planning meeting. This is an ideal way of making sure that everyone's contributions are heard and that there is joined up planning and support involving all.

Within the meeting others may contribute to the risk and resilience factors, however, most of the meeting should be spent on planning the desired outcomes and the actions. For our children and young people with EBSNA it is important that we agree realistic outcomes and that the associated actions are achievable (i.e., SMART targets). Overly ambitious desired outcomes and actions at this stage can bring a halt to any progress.

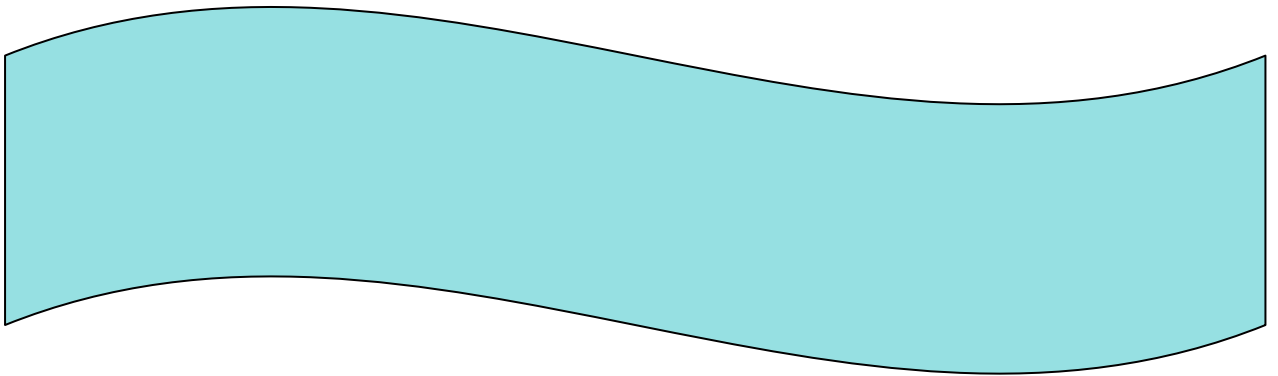
Desired outcomes should be phrased "X will ..." It is much easier to observe and measure the presence of a behaviour rather than something that isn't happening or is absent. Desired outcomes can be considered under the different areas of risk/resilience: Child/Young Person; Family; School Environment/ Local Community as will the associated actions. Often the actions associated with the desired outcomes will be for the trusted adults around the young person rather than the young person themselves. Figure 8 provides an example of some desired outcomes and actions for a child or young person experiencing EBSNA.

The desired outcomes and actions should be used as your plan and should be a dynamic document. Set a date to review the actions and ensure clear communication among all involved, in particular the child or young person and their family.

Desired outcomes	Actions		
	What?	Who?	When?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• X will be able to attend and manage a short period of time in school.• X will be able to manage transitions better.• X will be able to contribute their view on the current situation.	PTPC will meet X and escort them to support base.	Pastoral Care Teacher	11am Monday
	Staff will allow X to leave lessons slightly earlier to avoid the crowded hallways.	Subject teachers, PTPC	Immediate effect
	PTPC will support X to complete the GMWP and the landscape of fear.	Pastoral Care teacher	Date to be confirmed with X

Figure 15: Exemplar of desired outcome and actions

Section 6: Effective Intervention



Section 6: Effective Intervention

Education Scotland (2023) reported there are no ‘silver bullets’ to addressing school non-attendance nationally and it is recognised schools use a wide range of interventions to improve and support pupil attendance. The Education Endowment Foundation (2022) reports that there is some promise for certain approaches and interventions that meet the individual needs of pupil and their families who find it difficult to attend school. Effective interventions documented within the available literature have been explored below.

Supporting Transitions

Children and young people make numerous transitions throughout their life and most especially within their educational experiences. Many of these transitions occur daily, for example, moving from one activity or lesson to another. Transitions can also include more subtle changes within a child or young persons’ environment, for example, the change of a class teacher or a change in the way the furniture is arranged. These are known as horizontal transitions. At certain points in children and young people’s lives, they will also experience vertical transitions. These are often known as ‘big transitions’ such as starting primary school or moving up to secondary school, moving to a new house or a change of care placement.

Transitions can be a period filled with a range of emotions for both children and young people and their parents/carers and can be especially challenging for children and young people experiencing EBSNA. Many of our Autistic children and young people also find transitions anxiety provoking and challenging. The need for consistency and predictability is likely to be interrupted during a transition so transitions need to be managed carefully.

Research has shown that the transition from primary to secondary school correlates with an increased prevalence in the number of children and young people experiencing EBSNA. This is likely due to the significant changes between the primary and secondary environment. For example: secondary schools are often larger; increased numbers of students; various lessons timetabled throughout the day; different teaching styles; different teaching pedagogies; increased level of demand; academic expectations; workload; travel to and from school.

Successful transitions involve the child or young person being supported to adapt to their new environment and to manage the emotions that the process of change often evokes. Glasgow articulated its position in relation to supporting transitions in its guidelines ‘[Every Child is Included Supported](#)’ Policy Guidelines’ 6.4 (pg.18). Specific guidance is also provided to support effective procedures for children and young people with speech, language, and communication needs. If any transitional needs are identified then the appropriate support should be provided, gaining the child or young person’s view around ‘what could make this better/easier’.

Table 7: Recommended tools for supporting transitions

	Brief Description
Autism Toolbox (2019) Transitions	Autism Toolbox provides information on how to support autistic learners, their families and school communities with transitions. Access Autism Toolbox Transitions

Glasgow Centre for Population Health (2022)	This report presents findings based on a thematic analysis of interviews and focus group transcripts from research with a sample of 31 young people living within the Glasgow area. The findings provide a useful evidence base for GCPH and its partners to consider.
Young People's Transition to Adulthood	<u>Access Glasgow Centre for Population Health Young People's Transition to Adulthood Report</u>
Every Child is Included and Supported: Getting it Right in Glasgow the Nurturing City (2022) Effective Transition Procedures for CYP with Speech, Language and Communication Needs	<p>The main aim of this booklet is to provide guidance for all practitioners on effective transitional practice that supports children/ young people with SLCN, including those with autism, and their families during what can be a very stressful and anxious time. A key aim of any transitional programme should be that it supports the child and family to feel secure and confident in the new environment and in a position to tackle the challenges ahead.</p> <p><u>Access Every Child is Included and Supported: Effective Transition Procedures</u></p> <p>The appendices for this document can be found following the below link.</p> <p><u>Access Every Child is Included and Supported Appendices</u></p>

Poor Sleep Hygiene

As CYP grow and develop it is vital they are getting enough sleep. Sleep is important for CYP health, wellbeing, learning and development. When CYP do not get enough sleep, they are likely not going to have enough energy for the next day's activities (NHS KIDS Scotland, 2017). Poor sleep can negatively impact a CYP cognitive functions including their attention, thinking, processing, memory, and decision making. In addition, poor sleep is likely to increase anxiety, irritability, and the likelihood that a CYP will experience increased negative emotions (Sleep Scotland, 2022).

Table 8: Recommended tools for supporting sleep

	Brief Description
NHS KIDS Scotland	Kids Independently Developing Skills (KIDS) website focuses on how to support CYP to live meaningful, healthy, independent lives. Information from NHS staff for CYP, their

	<p>families and professionals. This website includes a helpful section on the importance of sleep.</p> <p>https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/sleep-problems/</p>
Sleep Action	<p>Sleep Action, formally Sleep Scotland is an organisation who provide sleep support, training, and resources across the UK. Sleep Action work with CYP, professionals, families, and employers to promote health sleep for everyone.</p> <p>https://sleepaction.org/</p> <p>https://sleepaction.org/sleep-support/children-families/</p> <p>https://sleepaction.org/sleep-support/children-families/gateway-to-good-sleep/teen-zone/</p>

Parent/Carer Engagement and Attendance

The positive relationships parents/carers have within education begin in the early years and are vital to ensuring good attendance throughout a child or young person's education career. Therefore, it is essential education establishments capitalise on these opportunities ensuring relationships are built on mutual trust and respect. When working in partnership with parents, education establishments are not only promoting positive attendance but are also well placed to reducing barriers to attendance when they arise, through early intervention ensuring support is provided to overcome such barriers as quickly as possible (Scottish Government, 2019). The Scottish Government (2019) provides guidance to all education authorities across Scotland on the promotion of good attendance and the management of attendance in Included, Engaged, and Involved – Part 1. This includes further information of how education establishments can effectively promote parent/carers engagement.

When CYP experience EBSNA, parent/carers interventions are those that aim to support and encourage attendance at school through the involvement of the parents/carers. The Education Endowment Foundation (2022) through their rapid evidence assessment of school attendance interventions identified two distinct types of parent/carers engagement interventions, these included a focus on communication and targeted support through planning with parents/carers. Parental communication interventions aim to increase awareness of the consequences of absenteeism or target commonly held parental misbeliefs undervaluing the importance of regular attendance. The aim of these interventions are that greater awareness or eradicating misconceptions will lead to parents/carers taking a more active role in improving pupil attendance.

Targeted parental engagement interventions are responsive in nature and include approaches that involve staff having discussions with parents to gain information about the reasons for low attendance and collaboratively planning support students and their families need to overcome attendance barriers. These interventions are usually more intensive with families having access to multiple services. Therefore, access to these interventions is usually assessed by monitoring attendance and identifying those pupils whose attendance is of significant concern and the approach is tailored to the needs of the pupil and the family.

When working collaboratively with parents and carers, it is important to acknowledge potential speech, language, and communication differences (SLCD) that they may have. To enhance participation, it is important to consider how to build trust and respect and create

enabling environments. This [research guidance document](#) from Shaping Autism Research in the UK advises how to create these spaces and how to work successfully in partnership with families with SLCD. The National Autistic Society also has a small section on promoting communication between schools and families [Resolving differences in Scotland](#) (autism.org.uk).

Table 9: Recommended tools support and promote the Engagement of Parents/Carers in Education

	Brief Description
Scottish Government (2019) Included, engaged, and involved part 1: promoting and managing school attendance.	Guidance to education authorities in Scotland on the promotion of good attendance and the management of attendance. Access Included, Engaged, and Involved - Part 1
Education Endowment Foundation (2022) Attendance Interventions Rapid Evidence Assessment	Rapid evidence assessment on attendance interventions for school-aged pupils. This rapid evidence assessment examines the existing research on interventions that aim to improve pupils' school attendance and the characteristics of these interventions, based on a systematic search of existing literature. Focused parent engagement interventions are considered (p.16-21). Access Attendance Interventions Rapid Evidence Assessment
Education Endowment Foundation (2021) Parent Engagement	The Education Endowment Foundation provides a review of evidence promoting the use of parent engagement in education. This is based on 97 studies. Key findings are highlighted along with cost implications and guidance on how to consider such approaches for implementation within your own establishment. Access Education Endowment Foundation Parent Engagement
Scottish Government (2018) "Learning together" Scotland's national action plan on parental involvement, parental engagement, family learning and learning at home 2018 - 2021	The plan sets out a vision for parental involvement and engagement for the next three years. It covers the journey that a child takes from pre-birth to age 18. It takes account of the national and international evidence base as well as policy and practice expertise across the Scottish education system. It contains 13 goals and 52 national actions. It provides a national vision, but it allows for local and community innovation and flexibility. Importantly, it highlights the leadership of those who make the difference day in and day out: parents and families, teachers, headteachers, managers, practitioners, and other partners. Access "Learning together" Scotland's national action plan on parental involvement, parental engagement, family learning and learning at home 2018-2021

Attendance and Poverty

Addressing poverty is a priority for Glasgow Education Services and wider partner agencies. As outlined above, poor attendance often correlates to CYP and their families from our most disadvantaged communities. Schools are often knowledgeable about practical supports to mitigate poverty for CYP and their families. The below table does not provide an exhaustive list but aims to provide insight into some tools and resources schools and partners could find useful.

Table 10: Recommended tools to support addressing poverty

	Brief Description
Child Poverty Action Group in Scotland (2023) – The Cost of the School Day Toolkit	<p>This toolkit provides a range of resources to support schools, local authorities, and their partners to identify and address financial barriers to participation and learning.</p> <p>Access Cost of the School Day Toolkit</p> <p>Access Introduction to Cost of the School Day Toolkit</p>
Glasgow Cost of Living Guide (2023)	<p>This directory provides easy access to available supports across Glasgow in relation to cost of living, clearly presented under the themes.</p> <p>Access Glasgow Cost of Living Guide</p>
Financial Inclusion Support Officer (FISO) Guide (2023)	<p>FISO's work with families to try to maximise income. Since the pilot in 2020/21 the total financial gain across 29 secondary schools is just under 4.9 million.</p> <p>Access FISO Guide Glasgow</p>
Child Poverty Action Group Scotland (2024)	<p>Examples of measures schools across Scotland are taking to reduce costs, boost incomes and support low-income families.</p> <p>Access Cost of School Day Ideas Bank</p>

Targeted Support

Table 11: Recommended tools to offer individual targeted support

	Brief Description
Cognitive Behavioural Approaches (CBA)	<p>Cognitive Behavioural Approaches (CBA) can help individuals manage difficulties by changing the way they think and behave. It works by identifying how a person's thoughts and behaviours interact to create anxiety and</p>

	<p>then offers ways to challenge these. There is a clear evidence base for the effectiveness of CBA in helping to manage anxiety.</p> <p>There are several CBA based resources that can be used by schools:</p> <p><i>'Starving the Anxiety Gremlin'</i> by Kate Collins-Donnelly.</p> <p><i>'Homunculi Approach to Social and Emotional Wellbeing: A Flexible CBT Programme for Young People on the Autism Spectrum or with Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties'</i> by Anne Greig and Tommy MacKay.</p> <p><i>'Helping Your Child with Fears and Worries (2nd Edition): A self-help guide'</i> by Cathy Creswell and Lucy Willetts.</p> <p><i>'Cool connections with cognitive behavioural therapy: Encouraging self-esteem, resilience and wellbeing in children and young people using CBT approaches'</i> by Laurie Seiler.</p> <p><i>'Think good feel good: A cognitive behavioural therapy workbook for children and young people'</i> by Paul Stallard.</p> <p><i>'What to do when you worry too much: A kid's guide to overcoming anxiety'</i> by Dawn Huebner.</p>
A Therapeutic Treasure Deck of grounding, soothing, coping and regulating cards	<p>A pack of 70 cards which give a selection of coping and regulating strategies. Presented in a playful, non-threatening way involving games, skills, and activities. The cards address a wide range of common issues including anxiety, stress, low mood, sleep difficulties and emotional dysregulation.</p> <p><u>Access Therapeutic Treasure Deck on Jessica Kingsley Publishers</u></p>
Relaxation Activities	<p>Can be used initially with adult support with a view to being used independently. Analogy of learning to ride a bike or play an instrument useful here – these need to be practiced before you can become proficient.</p>

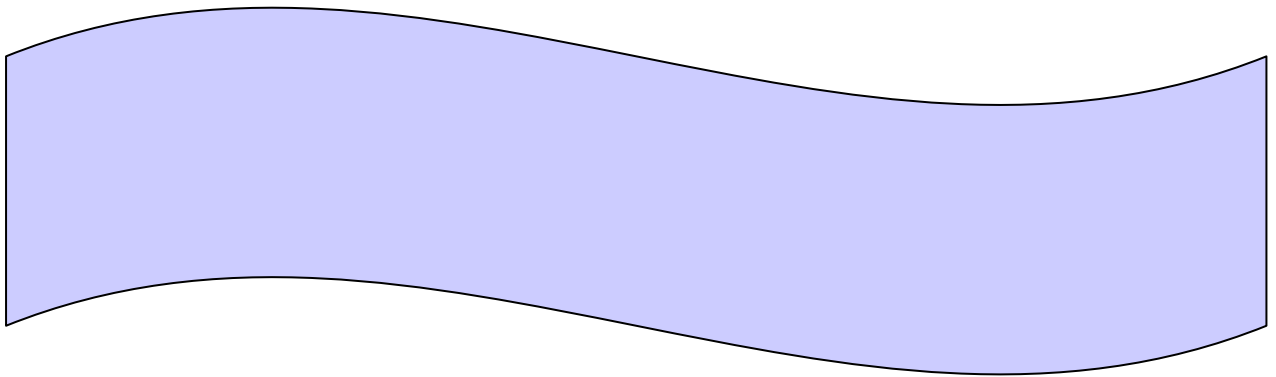
	Download Calm Breathing Download Muscle Relaxation Download Coping Thoughts
	<p>Planning Alternative Tomorrows with Hope (PATH) is a person-centred planning technique that helps children and young people develop realistic goals for the future.</p> <p>Some key features of person-centred planning include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The person is at the centre • Family and friends are supporters in the planning process • The plan reflects what's important to the person, their abilities, and the support they need <p>A range of guidance is available in relation to developing a PATH:</p> <p>Access Inclusive Solutions Website</p> <p>Access PATH planning tool</p>

If you require further advice in relation to the above resources, you can speak to your link Educational Psychologist and/or could raise a discussion through SIIM or JST.

There are also several other supports which could be signposted to the child or young person and their family:

- [View Glasgow Youth Health Service Website](#)
- [View Glasgow Association for Mental Health Website](#)
- [View National Autism Implementation Team Website](#)
- [View National Autistic Society Moving Forward Website](#)
- [View NHS Education for Scotland Website](#)
- [View Glasgow Virtual School Information](#)
- [View Quarriers REACH Service Website](#)
- [View Action for Children Positive Choices Website](#)

Section 7: Autism, Speech, Language and Communication Differences (SLCD) and EBSNA



Section 7: Autism, Speech, Language and Communication Differences (SLCD) and EBSNA

When working with children and young people (CYP) it is important to consider how they communicate with the world around them. It is estimated around 10% of school aged children have Speech, Language, Communication Differences (SLCD).

For some CYP this might mean they face additional challenges in school. All children and young people with SLCD could be vulnerable to experiencing EBSNA.

What are SLCD?

SLCD are extremely broad and can impact speech, language and/or communication (see figure 15). CYP with SLCD may have difficulties with some, or all, of the following areas:

- Understanding and expressing spoken language
- Processing and making speech sounds
- Utilising and understanding language in different social settings (ICAN, 2008)

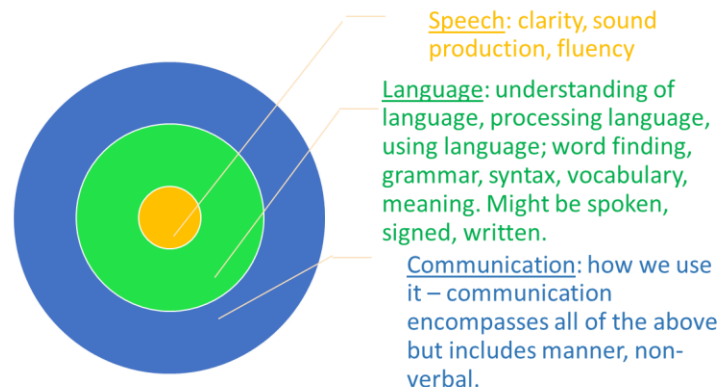


Figure 16: Overview of SLCD

- Anyone can have a SLCD. SLCD can occur on their own without any other developmental needs or can be part of a wider neurodevelopmental profile which may also include developmental delay; hearing impairment; Autism; Developmental Language Disorder; Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD); Developmental Co-ordination Disorder (DCD) or learning disability. This is not an exhaustive list. We therefore must recognise that anyone with a relationship with someone, needs to care about SLCD.

Autism and EBSNA

1 in 100 people in Scotland are Autistic. Autism is a neurological difference which can impact:

- The way in which a person communicates and interacts with others
- How information is processed
- How a person makes sense of the world.

If schools and early years establishments provide appropriately adapted environments, autistic learners can be supported and encouraged to achieve their fullest potential.

The concept of Autism being a 'spectrum' can lead to people thinking autistic individuals can be either 'high functioning' or 'low functioning' and these are unhelpful and offensive terms. Each autistic person will have a unique set of traits. Autistic people won't all act in the same way and will have varying strengths and areas of need. This [comic strip](#) provides information on the concept of an autistic constellation – created by Autistic artist Rebecca Burgess.

How social communication and sensory processing differences can lead to increased anxiety ([Autism Toolbox](#)).

Autistic people experience anxiety more than the general population (Autism Toolbox, 2023). In 2017, a review of many studies found that autistic CYP had higher levels of anxiety than their non-autistic peers (Francisca, van Steensel, Heeman, 2017). Potential reasons for this increased anxiety are:

- Coping with complex, confusing and unpredictable world
- Understanding people and social situations
- Sensory differences (including sensory overload, sensitivities)
- Patterns of thinking (e.g., literal thinking style, need for structure)

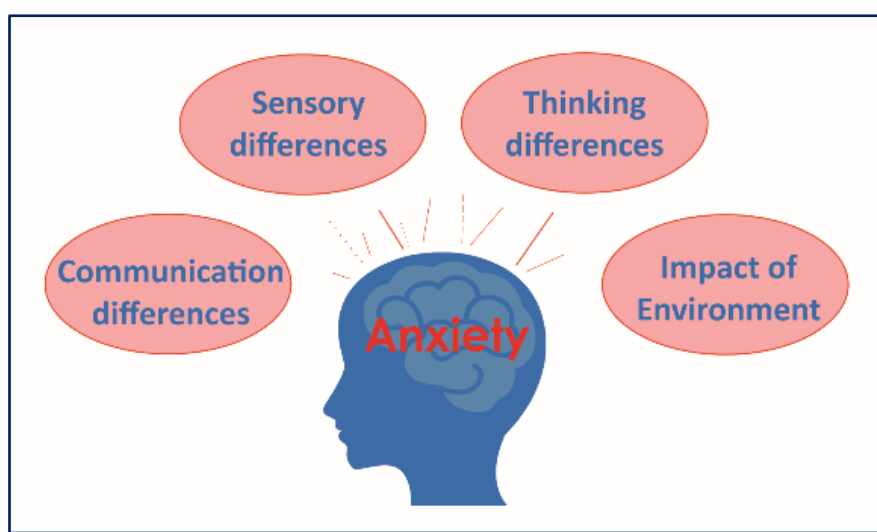


Figure 17: [Core Features of the Autistic Experience – The Autism Toolbox, Education Scotland.](#)

SLCD and Autism can impact on a CYP's ability to express how they are feeling with words or behaviours. Some common signs will be:

- Physiological (sweating, pale, shaking)
- Communication changes (e.g., talking more or less)
- Physical symptoms (pains, headaches)

Autistic learners are particularly vulnerable to experiencing EBSNA. For many, this is due to finding the school environment and the demands of school unbearable. Terminology related to EBSNA, such as school refusal is often unhelpful as it implies a choice and unwillingness to attend when in fact the child or young person is unable to cope or tolerate the school environment.

When an autistic individual's communication, sensory and thinking differences are supported, this can lead to reduced anxiety. There is a reciprocal relationship between autistic learners and their environment – this not only includes the physical environment, but also the people around them. Therefore, schools should consider adaptations to the environment that could support Autistic learners to feel safer and more settled in school.

Masking is a coping strategy for many autistic individuals which involves “covering up or suppressing natural and actual internal feelings, preferences, and reactions to sensory, communication and social experiences, also referred to as ‘autistic traits’.” (NAIT, 2022). In a world designed for neurotypical ways of being, which is not always accepting of difference and diversity, masking can function to reduce feelings of standing out or the experience of stigma. Masking can help CYP feel safe or accepted. However, it often requires enormous effort and energy, and can lead to professionals missing or not understanding the difficulties a CYP might be having at school. This, in turn, can lead to increased anxiety and may then lead to EBSNA. [NAIT guidance](#) highlights helpful supports around masking and school non-attendance.

Assessment and information gathering

A CYP's communication stage may help you determine appropriate tools to consult with them, as demonstrated in the table below. Many of the tools and resources mentioned in this table can be found in Section 5:

Table 12: Recommended tools to consult with CYP aligned to communication stage

Communication Stage (based on Prizant et al., 2005).	Short description	How CYP at this stage may appear when anxious (Autism Toolbox, 2024)	Potential tools for consulting CYP
Before words... Social Partner Stage NAIT has provided more information and advice here	No or limited verbal language May not communicate intentionally Typically regulates emotions via sensory or comfort seeking behaviour.	Vocalisations Hitting out or kicking Withdrawal or refusal to take part Flight (e.g. running away) Increased rigidity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mosaic approach • Talking mats
Emerging language...	Communicate using some words or symbols e.g.	As above, plus: Controlling interactions/play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talking mats

Language Partner Stage NAIT has provided more information and advice here	pictures/ sign language Communicates with intent Engages in some social interactions and routines May communicate their emotions and regulate with self-talk or help from adults	to make situations more predictable Arguing Repetitive questioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mapping the Landscape • Visual GMWP • Nurturing Me • School Wellbeing Cards
Conversational... Conversational Partner Stage	Uses language for a range of social functions Shares information about past/ future events May engage in co-regulation with trusted adults and identify own coping strategies May struggle to understand intentions of others and social norms.	As above, plus: Avoidance of unpredictable situations Avoidance of social interactions Seeking reassurance Return to previous behaviours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mapping the Landscape • GMWP • Nurturing Me • School Wellbeing Cards

Supports

Targeted supports will be determined by the assessment information you have gathered, taking into consideration the unique factors contributing to EBSNA and the strengths and differences of the YP you are working with. You should also consider targeted approaches for CYP, based on the communication stages discussed above. Please see [NAIT's assessment and planning framework](#) for ideas, resources and approaches. Supports will need to be tailored to the individual and not all of the supports outlined will be appropriate for all autistic learners.

In consultation with autistic CYP and families, NAIT (2023) have produced [key messages](#) on supporting CYP with SLCD in school.



Figure 18: NAIT key messages on supporting CYP with SLCD in school

One of the key messages highlighted within this document is 'A neuro-affirming approach'. This is a rights-based approach driven by the neurodivergent community, which views autism as a difference not deficit, values difference, changes language and mindset and advocates for the autistic community. Some key ways you may create a neuro-affirming environment include:

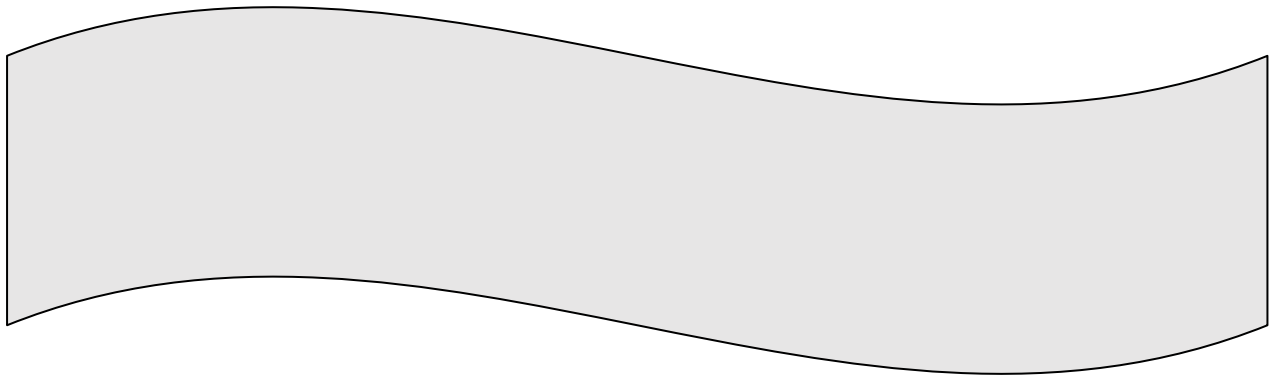
- Personal reading, reflection and skill development. [The Autism LevelUP self-reflection tool](#) may support your journey towards becoming an advocate and ally of the autistic community.
- Valuing autistic identity and diversity. [The Learning About Neurodiversity in Schools curricular resource pack](#) (LEANS) may support a school ethos which values neurodiversity.
- Ensure that autistic YP are not expected to conform to neurotypical ways of communicating and participating. This [neuro-affirming goal setting tool](#) may support you to create goals which are important to that YP.

The table below outlines evidence-based supports, including some suggested by the [CIRCLE resource](#), which may support autistic CYP experiencing EBSNA:

Table 13: Recommended tools to support autistic CYP experiencing EBSNA

Level	Ideas for support	Resources/tools
Social environment (home/school)	Reduce or adapt language. Identify key adults/Team around the child. Build trusting relationships. Compassionate mindset Neuro-affirming approach	TALK strategies CIRCLE environment tool LEANS resource NAIT 2 Key Adults Neuro-affirming goals Teacher guide for understanding neurodiversity
Physical environment (home/school)	Provide predictability. Review and adapt sensory environment. Sensory/calm spaces	CIRCLE environment tool NAIT Safe Space guidance NHS KIDS website Classroom Regulator Tool
Structures and routines (home/school)	Clear, predictable routines Break down tasks. Motivating activities Reduce/prepare CYP for transitions, change and new experiences where possible. Sensory/ movement breaks Visual timetable	CIRCLE environment tool EPIC resources Transition supports for CYP with SLCD Autism Education Trust – transition guidance for Autistic CYP Neuro-affirming social stories
Child/young person	Support emotional regulation. Support peer interactions Meet sensory needs and preferences. Implement visual and adapted communication supports. Be aware of potential masking. Support CYP's understanding of their own profile of strengths and needs. Ensuring there is not an expectation that CYP conform to neuro-normative expectations	CIRCLE determining stages tool CIRCLE child participation scale Zones of Regulation NAIT Guide to Autistic Masking My Autism Profile

Section 8: Support Services Responding to EBSNA



GVS Support

Information about GVS supports can be accessed here: [GVS](#)

Care Experienced Learners

Educational Establishments, Educational Psychologists, Social Workers and Residential Children's House Workers can refer care experienced learners directly to GVS by emailing the following email address for a CEL referral form: **cel@glasgow.gov.uk**

What is the offer?

- Advice and/or a multi-agency consultation meeting which will be solution-focussed and strengths-based
- Attendance at a looked after and accommodated review or My Meeting
- Signposting towards supports for example tutoring, mentoring, therapeutic support and involvement with the Outdoor Resource Centre or Blairvadach Outdoor Education and ILS provision, either face-to-face or through digital learning
- Staff training to schools on what it means to be Care Experienced and support Senior Staff to complete the Care Experience Self Evaluation toolkit

All Learners

The Interrupted Learners Service (ILS) is now part of GVS and by providing tuition and support to pupils, ILS attempts to ameliorate the effect of disruption to education that some children/young people can experience for a range of reasons such as health or other exceptional circumstances. Such tuition is not an alternative to school attendance but a temporary support until the child/young person can re-engage with an educational establishment. There are 2 possible arrangements for providing ILS support:

ILS (School)

A teacher from a Glasgow school can act as a tutor for a child/young person out with school hours.

ILS (GVS)

There are a number of GVS tutors, including staff deployed flexibly to meet the needs of pupils. Provision will be either through digital learning or face-to-face. This support may be either one-to-one or in a small group setting.

Glasgow Educational Psychology Service

Glasgow Educational Psychology are available, through your link educational psychologist, for consultation and advice at SIIM and LC-JST meetings and through support and development groups for EBSNA. We can also offer more targeted, individualised support for your establishment through training, development work and research.

For further information please contact: alison.white@glasgow.gov.uk

Speech and Language Therapy

The SLT service works alongside the key people in children and young people's lives to support their understanding of communication differences. Our role might include increasing knowledge of communication differences and how these might impact a person's daily life and their well-being. We help the key adults to consider the environment and their own communication as well as their understanding of the young person's communication differences and how these might be contributing to EBSNA. We can do this through discussions at SIIM, consultations with young people and their families and staff within individual establishments. Each learning community has a named Link SLT who schools, and families can access for any assistance.

Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)

CAMHS offers specialist input for children who have a moderate to severe mental health difficulty which is having a significant impact on daily functioning. CAMHS provides specialist diagnostic assessment and provides psychological, systemic and/or pharmacological therapy. Not all EBSNA cases will require CAMHS input. For those with a moderate to severe mental health difficulty experiencing EBSNA, CAMHS will assess and try to develop an understanding of some of the factors affecting EBSNA. Intervention will be dependent on this understanding. However, as an example, if anxiety is affecting EBSNA, intervention may involve individual 1:1 work with the young person to provide psychoeducation and anxiety management strategies. It may also include a graded exposure intervention developed collaboratively to support the young person with their goals in relation to EBSNA. CAMHS will also often liaise with school/parents to ensure consistency across the system.

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