

Role of the EBSA team and The Referral Process

We are a 2-year project funded by additional funds from the 'impact of COVID' budget.

Emotionally Based School Avoidance or Refusal (EBSA) is a pattern of absence where reluctance, or refusal, to attend or stay in educational settings is rooted in anxiety or fear. **This may be the result of an interplay between personal, family, school or wider environmental issues. It is not a diagnosis, but a special educational need.**

The EBSA team is a small multi-disciplinary team that works directly with young people aged 11-16 years, who are not attending school due to anxiety or fear. We will use a trauma-informed, restorative and systemic approach to the work with young people, their families and schools.

The team:

- Works in 'co-production' with the young person, family members, school staff, school systems and the wider professional network
- Works in a flexible manner, paying attention to individual and contextual factors and uncovering some of the functions served by school avoidance
- Supports children, young people, schools and families to understand reasons for non-attendance and emphasising the need for a rapid return to school alongside good support, reasonable adjustments, and adaptations within the school environment

Schools will use a graduated response to the child's anxiety associated with attending school, using the Assess, Plan, Do, Review cycle of intervention.

The continuum of need for those experiencing EBSA also determines the response from the EBSA team

• Table 1: EBSA Team graduated response to EBSA


	Level of school non-attendance	EBSA Team response
1.	Not going to school at all	Consultation with the EBSA Team
2	High levels of fear or anxiety: The CYP has recently stopped going to school.	School referral to EBSA team for support. School attend training. School use the information and suggestions available in Assess, Plan, Do Review cycles.
3	High levels of fear or anxiety: The CYP has recently started avoiding going into class for most of the time.	School referral to EBSA team for support. School attend training. School use the information and suggestions available in Assess, Plan, Do Review cycles.
4	Moderate levels of fear or anxiety: CYP is attending school but attendance may be varied.	School attend training. School use the information and suggestions available in Assess, Plan, Do Review cycles. Consultation with the EBSA Team.
5	Low levels of anxiety e.g. around tests, Monday mornings. Maybe beginning to want to miss school, hard to get ready in the mornings.	School attend training. School use the information and suggestions available in Assess, Plan, Do Review cycles.

The criteria for the EBSA Team is:

The criteria for accepting a referral for a CYP who has not or is struggling to attend school post Covid due to emotionally based school avoidance are:

- The child is of secondary age and on the role, or keen to get onto the role, of a mainstream secondary school or some alternative providers.
- The CYP is staying at home due to anxiety or fear related to being in school
- The parent/carers have made reasonable efforts, currently or at an earlier stage of the problems, to secure attendance at school, and/or the parents expressed their intention for the child/YP to attend school full time.
- The child/YP does not display severe anti-social behaviour, beyond resistance to parent/carers attempts to get them into school.
- There is no physical or medical reason for non-attendance (not including psychosomatic illnesses due to anxiety).
- School can evidence cycles of assess plan do review to support CYP to attend e.g., using the Therapeutic Thinking model.
- The CYP expresses a desire to be in school or class, but feels unable to do so.

Timeline of work with the CYP, Family and School



Weeks 1-5	Weeks 6-13	Weeks 14 onwards	Reviews
Weekly Trauma Informed Assessment, building relationships. TAC meeting in Week 5. Write Plan in Week 5/6	Follow Plan of Trauma Informed & Restorative Interventions. Further assessments as needed in formulation to test hypothesis and gather information.	Continuation of plan & formulations as required. Regular TAC meetings.	Formal Review at 6 months. Continue with formulations, interventions, TACs and plans as needed. Review 3 months after case is closed
Formulation week 1 & 5	Formulation week 9 & 13	Formulations every 4 weeks	Formulations every 4 weeks



Who are We?

The EBSA Team:

Corina Crowley
Team Manager

Sharon Priest
Assistant Team
Manager

Cornelia Bowen-
McGuire
Emotional Wellbeing
Practitioner

Stephen Hammond
Family Worker

Bibek Pokhrel
Assistant Educational
Psychologist

Hermoine Hedges-
Robinson
Youth Worker

Eleanor Galvin
Emotional Wellbeing
Practitioner

Educational Psychologists Deb Hunter and Sophie Levitt will also be assisting the team.

