Emotionally based school avoidance information

1. My daughter really struggles to attend school due to her severe anxiety, and this became far worse during the pandemic and hasn’t really improved since. What support is available to help her attend?

**EPS reply** : We are very sorry to hear that your daughter has been struggling to attend school and that this has been a concern for some time now. While anxiety is a normal feeling which all people experience, for some this can become overwhelming. Since the pandemic, more young people than ever before experience what is known as ‘emotionally based school non-attendance’. Staying away from school makes worries about school seem greater. Fortunately, the situation can improve with the right support and we know that key relationships with caring staff in school can help bridge children back into school, supporting them practically, emotionally and academically. As part of the plan for your daughter’s return to school it’s also important to know what caused it and what help she needs. For example, if there is an issue about bullying or academic work she may need specific support from staff.

Enfield Educational Psychology Service also runs a termly online workshops for parents and carers who want to find out more. We are currently half way through our summer term workshops series.  Contact eps@enfield.gov.uk and we can let you know about the next workshop planned for the autumn term. We also advertise these through Our Voice.

Young people may benefit from information about understanding and managing their anxiety, and websites such as ‘Young Minds’ have helpful resources and ideas such as

Young Minds: [https://www.youngminds.org.uk/young-person/mental-health-conditions/anxiety/](https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fprotect-eu.mimecast.com%2Fs%2Fa317CnOQls72vKkhJGXzk%3Fdomain%3Dyoungminds.org.uk%2F&data=05%7C01%7Csuzy.francis%40enfield.gov.uk%7C77ec725c1e2949ad74e508db70a24721%7Ccc18b91d1bb24d9bac767a4447488d49%7C0%7C0%7C638227614687432764%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=gzXQowraAcKSRj5W96aZG%2FBFV0cdbczWALWDG42aJPg%3D&reserved=0).

The Autism Education Trust provides guidance on school-related stress and anxiety and how this can lead to EBSNA – see attached.

National Autistic Society: [https://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/topics/education/attendance-problems/parents](https://emea01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.autism.org.uk%2Fadvice-and-guidance%2Ftopics%2Feducation%2Fattendance-problems%2Fparents&data=05%7C01%7C%7Cd46ef6f55dee4a4ea88608db72805fff%7C84df9e7fe9f640afb435aaaaaaaaaaaa%7C1%7C0%7C638229668307106134%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=bPa2snKT84hTTbhxwZlS%2BlqdqzN8HDaWEnLZLxx7FJE%3D&reserved=0)

Enfield Local Offer – SEMH has a range of local and national services for children, parents and carers [https://www.enfield.gov.uk/services/children-and-education/local-offer/social-emotional-and-mental-health/social-emotional-and-mental-health#getting-help](https://emea01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.enfield.gov.uk%2Fservices%2Fchildren-and-education%2Flocal-offer%2Fsocial-emotional-and-mental-health%2Fsocial-emotional-and-mental-health%23getting-help&data=05%7C01%7C%7Cd46ef6f55dee4a4ea88608db72805fff%7C84df9e7fe9f640afb435aaaaaaaaaaaa%7C1%7C0%7C638229668307106134%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=qwqrxzlBMpZ%2Bmj1M2xLrqyGsEIcUHIcsukRtgGgyoZs%3D&reserved=0)

We also know that a small number of young people may need immediate help, if they are in crisis. The CAMHS crisis line is available 24/7 on **0800 151 0023 and** urgent care can also be accessed by calling 999. It may be helpful to speak to your GP to ask for some advice and further help.

Hopefully finding out more about the available support and having a focused meeting with school will enable her to build her attendance back up, and to reduce her concerns about school.