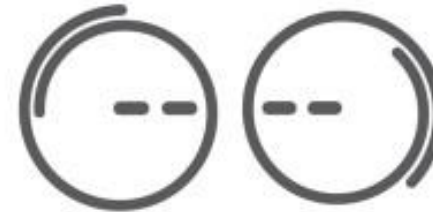


**Buckinghamshire  
SENDIAS  
Online Training  
coproduced with  
FACT Bucks**



BUCKINGHAMSHIRE  
**SEND IAS**  
SERVICE

# EBSA- Emotionally Based School Avoidance

- **Summary:** This webinar aims to inform you about support for children who are struggling to attend school
- **Duration:** 1 hour including opportunity for questions

# What is EBSA?

Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA) is when a child or young person experiences significant difficulties in attending school due to negative feelings

EBSA includes children and young people who:

- go to school but experience separation or social anxiety
- have frequent absences due to anxiety or illness
- are unable to attend daily

It can lead to reduced attendance and further anxiety regarding school.

In some cases, it can lead to extended absence from school

EBSA is not:

- truancy
- deliberate non-attendance.
- refusal to attend school

Children with EBSA feel unable to attend school



**Is there law  
relating to  
EBSA?**

**Law**

**Education Act Section 19: Right to Full time suitable education**

**Statutory Guidance**

**Education for Children with Health Needs who cannot attend school**

**Non-statutory Advice**

**Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools**

**Non-statutory Guidance**

**Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: February 2023**



**Is there local  
guidance  
relating to  
EBSA?**

**Local Authority Guidance**

**Bucks Family Information Service  
EBSA Guidance 2022**

# Can EBSA be diagnosed?

There are no diagnostic criteria for EBSA

There are common criteria that have been identified amongst children with EBSA. These are known as risk factors. There are:

**Individual Risk Factors**

**Family Risk Factors**

**School Risk Factors**

For more details on these please see **Identifying EBSA** section on [Bucks Family Information Service EBSA Guidance 2022](#)

# Push and Pull Factors

1. to avoid uncomfortable feelings brought on by attending school, such as anxiety or low mood.
2. to avoid situations that may be stressful
3. to reduce separation anxiety or to gain attention from significant others, such as parents or other family members
4. to pursue physical rewards outside of school



# The anxiety cycle

Anxiety is a very common feature of EBSA, not necessarily the cause

Avoidance is a way of coping with anxiety

When a situation is avoided, anxiety is reduced but only short term.

Next time the anxiety can feel even worse

Existing anxieties made worse by not attending:

- ❖ Missing lessons
- ❖ Getting behind in work
- ❖ Losing friendships

Importance of early help



# Emerging needs – What can Parents do?

- Managing separation anxiety
- Morning and evening routines
- Reward systems
- Speaking to your child about their worries
- Looking after yourself

For more detail on each strategy please see **Supporting Your Child** in the [Bucks Family Information Service EBSA Guidance 2022](#)

# What can the school do?

Identify a key member of staff to take the lead in supporting your child

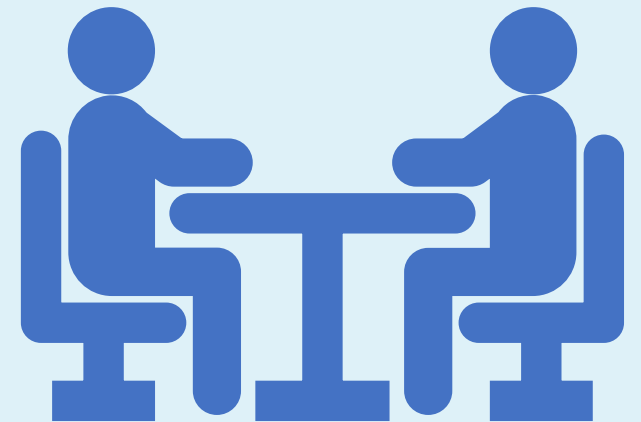
Take the time to listen and find out more about your child

Gather information from you, your child, and staff to find out why your child is worried about going to school

Make an assessment to find out what is making your child's attendance difficult

Work with you and your child to develop a plan to support your child to manage their worries and feel better about coming to school

Set a date to review this plan



# What support should my child have?

The support provided should come from the assessment and plan agreed with the school

The type and level of support will depend on what is making your child's attendance difficult

Some children may need adjustments such as being allowed to leave class early to avoid busy corridors, being allowed to sit at the side of the class

Some children may need general school support such as lunch clubs or a safe space for time out

# What support should my child have?

If a child's needs cannot be met through the usual support available in the school, they will need Special Educational Provision

The school should follow the Assess, Plan, Do, Review process

Please see **A Graduated Approach** in our [SENDIAS Webpages](#)

If the support is not working, the school should look at what additional or different support they can provide

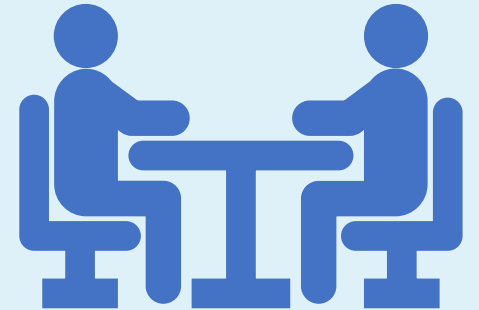
If a child with EBSA is not on the SEN register but continues to struggle, they may need to be put on the register, depending on the support they need

# The 4 stages of EBSA support in Bucks

**Stage 1 and 2 – Universal support:  
School and parents work together**

**Stage 3 – Partnership support in schools:  
Professionals in mental health and special  
educational needs provide help when needed.  
Educational Psychologists (EPs) offer advice to  
the school and the parent/carer.  
Schools can refer to the EBSA team.**

**Stage 4 – Targeted multi agency support:  
Multi-Agency support is required to help children  
become ready to go back to school.  
A plan is put in place to support the family and  
the child/young person.**



# Specialist support

Buckinghamshire schools have access to advice from professionals:

The Educational Psychology Team: offer drop-in sessions and consultations by request for EBSA.

If you feel that your child should access support via this service, you can email:

[EBSA@buckinghamshire.gov.uk](mailto:EBSA@buckinghamshire.gov.uk)

Please see **Integrated SEND Team** on our SENDIAS Web pages

For support for children aged 0 to 19 for difficulties with:

- physical movement
- communication and/or swallowing
- participating in everyday activities

Please see **Children and Young People's Therapy Services** on our [SENDIAS web pages](#) and [Therapies and Nurture Groups | SchoolsWeb](#)

# Specialist Support (continued)

For young people with mild to moderate mental health difficulties, help from the Bucks Mental Health Support Team may be available

You can ask your school to refer you: [CAMHS Bucks mental health support team referrals](#)

General guide to CAMHS for parents: [Parents' Guide to CAMHS | Guide for Parents | YoungMinds](#)

Please also see **Mental Health Support for Children and Young People up to 18** on our [SENDIAS webpages](#)



# Family Support

Buckinghamshire's Early Help and [Family Support Service](#) (FSS) support families with children who are struggling to attend school.

You can make a [referral](#) yourself or in collaboration with your child's school

You can also speak to the team's Information and Outreach Officers, who can help identify the right support.

[01296 383293](tel:01296383293) or [familyinfo@buckinghamshire.gov.uk](mailto:familyinfo@buckinghamshire.gov.uk)

# Should we request an EHC needs assessment?

Parents can request an Education Health and Care (EHC) needs assessment at any time by writing to the Local Authority

Legal Test for an EHC needs assessment - CAFA Section 36(8):

- whether the child or young person **has or may have** special educational needs (“**SEN**”); and
- whether they **may** need special educational provision to be made through an EHC plan.

LA are more likely to agree if all possible support has been put in place through SEN support, including advice from the EP EBSA team

For more information see **EHC Needs Assessments** on our [SENDIAS webpages](#)

# What if my child already has an EHCP?

- For children and young people with EHC plans, it is important that all the help in their plan continues, whether they can attend school or not
- This means help for all their needs as listed in section F of their plan including any therapies should be provided
- For more information, please see [Enforcing your EHC plan | \(IPSEA\)](#) and **EHC plans** on our [SENDIAS webpages](#)
- May need early annual review if needs have changed

# Staying Connected

- Keeping in touch with you and your child through home visits/ video calls
- Keeping you and your child updated- newsletters/ emails
- Encouraging your child to take part in school community events e.g trips, fairs
- Encouraging your child to join in with any lessons or activities they enjoy/ feel comfortable in
- Setting and marking work when they are unable to attend.

# Recording Absence

There is no specific guidance on absence coding for children with EBSA.

DfE's [Summary of responsibilities where a mental health issue is affecting attendance February 2023](#) says:

*School staff must record absences as authorised where it is not possible for a pupil to attend due to illness (both physical and mental health related).*

A school can code a child's absence due to EBSA as 'I' (illness) because of:

- the significant levels of anxiety that they experience
- the negative impact of their attendance on their mental health

DFE's [Working together to Improve School Attendance May 2022](#) says:

*Only where the school has a genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness should medical evidence be requested to support the absence.*

The unauthorized absence code is to be used: *Where no reason for absence is established or the school is not satisfied that the reason given is an authorized absence*

There should be clarity on what code has been used and why.

[Child Law Advice guidance on school attendance and absence](#)

# The Educational Entitlement Team

The Educational Entitlement team ensures that all children receive a full-time education that is right for them.

The team includes the [County Attendance](#) team who provide help to families, schools, and professionals with irregular school attendance.

You can also contact this team if you have any queries about attendance coding



## What does the law say: the right to education

### Law

Education Act Section 19: Right to full time suitable education

### Statutory guidance

Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school

Local authorities must provide suitable full-time education (or as much as the health condition will allow) for children who otherwise would not receive it because of illness

This should be as soon as it is clear that the child will be away from school for 15 days or more, whether consecutive or cumulative.

The school should let the local authority know if your child is likely to be away from school for more than 15 school days



# What does the law say: Alternative provision

## Statutory guidance

### Alternative Provision

The Local Authority has the duty to arrange alternative education for children who are unable to attend school.

In Buckinghamshire this duty to provide suitable full-time education is usually delegated to schools.

Schools are expected to consider a referral to the [Home Tuition and Hospital Teaching Service Buckinghamshire Council](#)

If you think your child should be receiving Alternative Provision you should contact the school in the first instance.

If you still have concerns, you could also contact [Bucks Educational Entitlement Team](#)



# Reduced Timetables

In exceptional circumstances, a temporary part time timetable may be offered to meet your child's needs

You do not have to agree to a reduced timetable

A reduced timetable requires written agreement from parents or carers.

Part time timetables should be short term to help a child return to school

A part time timetable should not be the only EBSA intervention

# Elective Home Education

Elective home education (EHE) is when a parent takes their child off roll at a school and assumes full responsibility for the education of their child.

EHE can work well when it is a positive choice and parents feel well equipped.

Sometimes parents feel pressurised into EHE or feel they have no other options.

Bucks SENDIAS does not advise taking a child off roll to home educate in these circumstances

# Complaining

## Step 1

Checking the appropriate route of dispute – do you need to:

- Make a complaint or
- Make a disability discrimination complaint/ claim or
- Appeal a decision

## Step 2

Informal and prompt start, making sure you contact the appropriate professional

## Step 3

Make your formal complaint

For more detailed information, please see: [What to do when things go wrong with SEND - complaining - Bucks SENDIAS Service](#)

# Other sources of advice and support

[Not fine in school](#) Organisation set up specifically for families whose children are experiencing school attendance barriers. Provides peer support, including Facebook support, advice and resources

[Young Minds](#) Charity focused on supporting children and young people's mental health. Provides advice and practical suggestions for parents and children who are struggling to attend school

[No Panic](#) Charity that helps and supports those living with panic attacks, phobias, OCD and other related anxiety disorders. Also provides support for carers

[National Autistic Society](#) Includes guide and resources for parents whose children are finding it difficult to attend school.

# Resources for children and young people

[Kooth](#) Digital mental health platform that provides online mental health support for children and young people aged 11-25

[Family Support Service](#) Free short face to face courses for children and young people on the following topics:

- how to feel more confident
- tips for moving up to secondary school
- how to have good relationships
- how to cope with stress, anxiety, and feeling low

Also offer youth drop ins at some Family Support Centres for 13-19 year olds (up to 25 for those with SEND)

[Local and national options to support young people's mental health](#) Information from Bucks Family Information service. Includes signposting to mental health services for young people and a searchable Directory.

# Bucks SENDIAS Service

- If you require further information to help you please first refer to the SENDIAS webpages: [Bucks SENDIAS service | Buckinghamshire Council](#) and if necessary contact SENDIAS using the **clickable [Bucks SENDIAS Contact Form](#)**
- Sign up for our email updates
- Live webchat:
  - Mondays 1-3pm and Fridays 10am- 12 noon

## Important information

In this news update you will find information about:

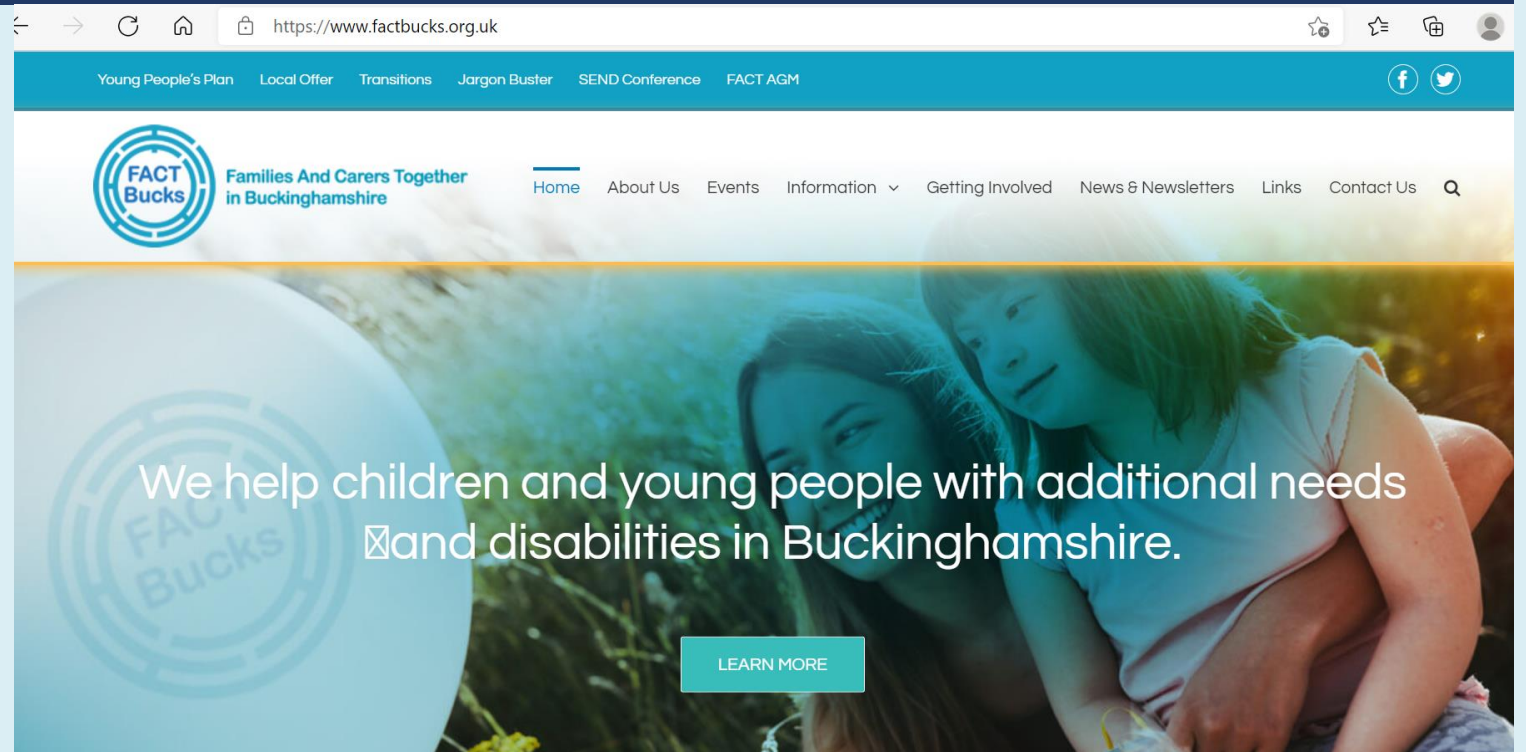
- New to SEND? - Free FACT Bucks/Bucks SENDIAS Service Webinar - 10-11am on Friday 27 January 2023
- Shout out for SEND - Youth Voice Bucks
- The Prince's Trust Team Programme
- Family Support Service - three exciting projects online and in person for young people in school years 7 and upwards starting in February 2023
- Contact - Welcome to What's new
- Bucks SENDIAS Service Live Web Chat

# FACT Bucks

<https://www.factbucks.org.uk/>

[FACT Bucks | Facebook](#)

[FACT Bucks - Families and Carers Together in Bucks \(@FACTBucks\) / Twitter](#)



**Any Questions?**