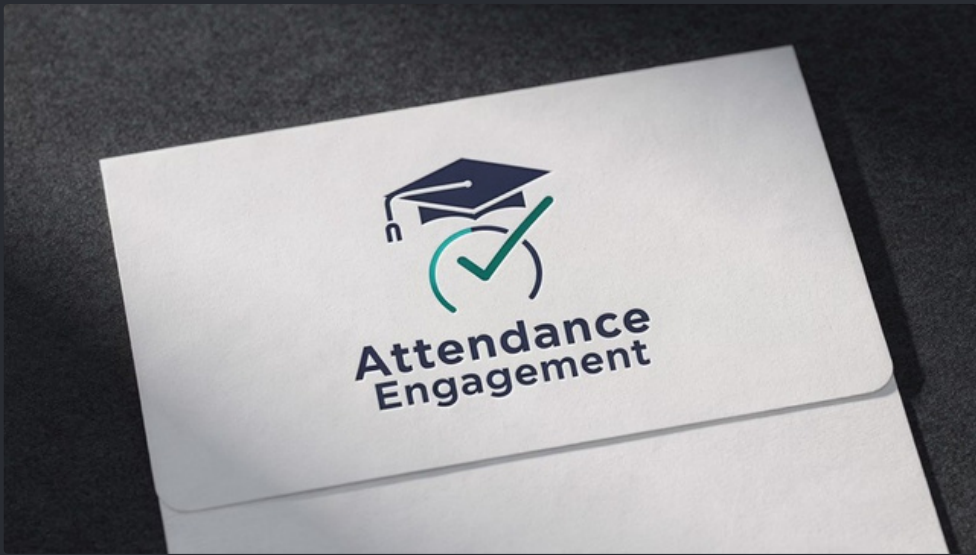




Powered by Attendance Magazine

A termly newsletter for parents and carers, focused on clear, compassionate support for Improving school Attendance.



Monthly Updates
Latest news and events for families



Practical Tips
Actionable advice for daily care



Emotional Support
Compassionate guidance and resources



Expert Q&A
Answers from trusted professionals



Community Stories
Real experiences from other carers



Resources
Links to helpful services and tools



Sign-up Info
How to subscribe and share

Welcome to the very first edition of our new termly newsletter! At Attendance Magazine, we're here to create a genuine partnership, supporting your child's education journey with understanding and practical guidance. We believe that when schools and families work together, every child can thrive.

We know life can be wonderfully complex, and sometimes school attendance presents challenges. Whether it's health concerns, a touch of anxiety, caring responsibilities or individual learning needs, we understand that these factors play a significant role. We truly hear you and are excited to embark on this journey with you, offering helpful insights and support each term..

Deep Dive feature

Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA)

In this edition, we explore what EBSA is, what it isn't, and practical ways schools and families can respond together to support children facing these challenges.

This month's edition is packed with valuable insights. You'll also find practical tips for fostering a positive school routine, a look at recent attendance statistics and inspiring community voices sharing their experiences and strategies. We aim to equip you with knowledge and foster a supportive community as we navigate these important aspects of your child's education together.

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Why Attendance opens doors...

Attendance isn't just about being in school; it's about opening doors to

opportunity, friendship, confidence and belonging. Every day your child attends, they're not just learning Maths or English; they're building routines, strengthening relationships and developing resilience that will serve them throughout life.

"Attendance isn't just about being in school; it's about opening doors to your child's future."

Colin Cattanach, School Attendance Leader

We understand that real-life pressures exist. Health challenges, anxiety, caring roles and special educational needs can all make consistent attendance difficult. High expectations and compassion aren't opposites; they work together. We believe in your child's potential and we're committed to removing barriers rather than adding pressure.



Friendships

Social connections develop through daily interaction and shared experiences. Consistent attendance helps children build meaningful relationships that provide support and joy.



Learning

Knowledge builds progressively; gaps become harder to fill over time. Regular attendance ensures children don't miss crucial building blocks in their education.



Confidence

Regular attendance builds self-belief and readiness for life's challenges. Children develop resilience through consistent engagement with school life.



Routines

Consistent patterns create security and prepare children for their future. Predictable rhythms help children feel safe and ready to learn.

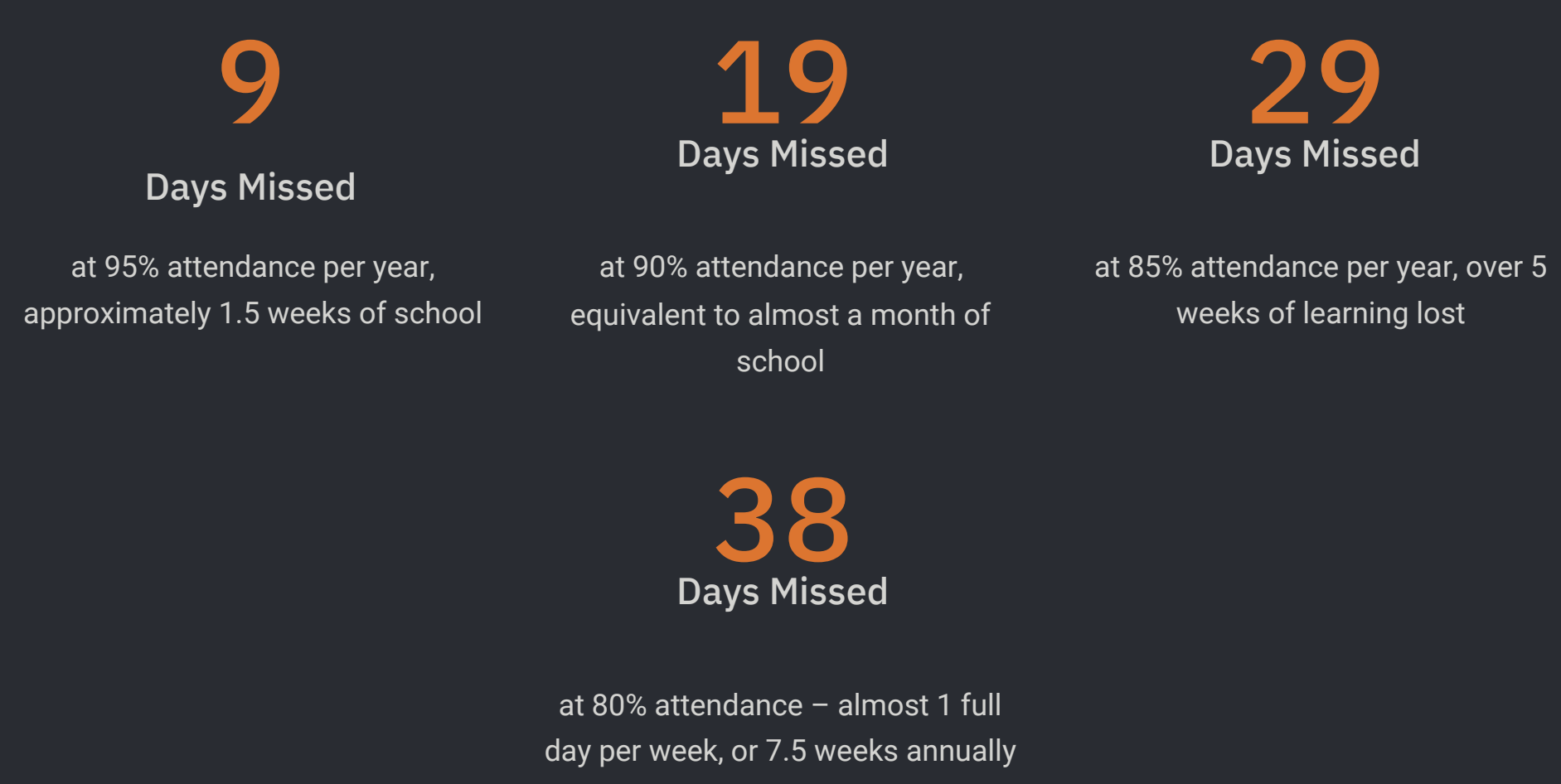
This newsletter exists because we believe in partnership. You know your child best. Schools have expertise in education and safeguarding. Together, we can create the conditions for your child to thrive. This is about working *with* you, not doing attendance *to* you.



The days add up faster than we think

Attendance isn't just about showing up; it's a foundational habit that shapes a child's entire educational journey. While a single day off might seem insignificant, these individual absences can quickly accumulate, creating patterns that are harder to break over time. What starts as an occasional day can, without proactive support, evolve into more frequent absences, subtly altering a child's engagement and experience at school. Furthermore, research indicates that attendance patterns established in primary school often carry through to secondary school, impacting academic success and social integration during these crucial formative years.

It's easy to think that a day here or there doesn't matter much. But attendance is cumulative and even small percentages represent significant time away from learning, friendships and routines. Understanding how these days add up helps us all see why consistency matters so much. The figures here typically relate to a standard state school year of 190 days:



Missing school doesn't just affect academic lessons; it deeply impacts the holistic school experience. A child might miss a crucial explanation in Maths, but also the laughter with friends during break time, the collaborative spirit of a group project, or the development of an inside joke that builds a sense of belonging. These seemingly small social moments and shared experiences are vital for a child's emotional well-being and sense of connection to their peers and the school community.

Psychologically, regular absence can initiate a "disconnection cycle." When a child misses school, they might feel a little behind academically, or they might feel left out of social circles. This can lead to increased anxiety about returning, making the next absence seem easier, which then reinforces the feeling of being disconnected. This self-reinforcing pattern can make it increasingly difficult for a child to re-engage, impacting their confidence, mental health, and that crucial sense of belonging.

For example, a child repeatedly missing Mondays might find it harder to catch up on weekend news, feel out of sync with project updates, and become an infrequent participant in classroom discussions.

To support every child, schools meticulously track and monitor attendance patterns. This isn't about judgment, but about identifying trends early and understanding the root causes of absence. By analysing data, schools can spot when a child’s attendance dips below expected levels or when certain days are consistently missed, allowing for targeted and timely intervention.



Scan the QR code to read about how schools can work with parents and carers

The good news? With early intervention and a strong partnership between home and school, we can absolutely turn things around together. This might involve a conversation with the school's attendance lead to understand underlying issues, exploring flexible timetables, access to mental health support or practical assistance with transport or routines. We are committed to working proactively with families to remove barriers, providing tailored support and guidance to help every child re-establish consistent attendance and thrive both academically and socially.

Understanding DfE attendance bandings

The Department for Education (DfE) established these attendance bandings as a national framework to help schools consistently identify and support children whose attendance patterns might be impacting their learning and well-being. They provide a common language and a proactive tool for schools to monitor attendance across all pupils, ensuring that potential issues are flagged early and timely support can be offered. **The aim is to ensure every child has the best opportunity to succeed.**

The Department for Education uses attendance bands to help schools identify where support might be needed. These aren't designed to shame families; they're tools to trigger **support first**, not punishment. Here's what they mean in plain English:



97%+ Outstanding

This is the gold standard, meaning your child is accessing almost all their learning opportunities; typically missing fewer than 5 days in a 190-day school year. This consistency builds confidence, strong friendships and maximises academic achievement. At this level, schools celebrate attendance and offer encouragement to maintain these excellent habits.



95-96% Good

Generally positive attendance, meaning your child is missing about 9-10 days per school year. Most children maintain progress at this level. While occasional absences for minor illness or appointments are expected, schools might gently monitor for patterns. Parents may receive a courtesy letter reminding them of the importance of attendance and offering early support if needed.



90-94% Concerning

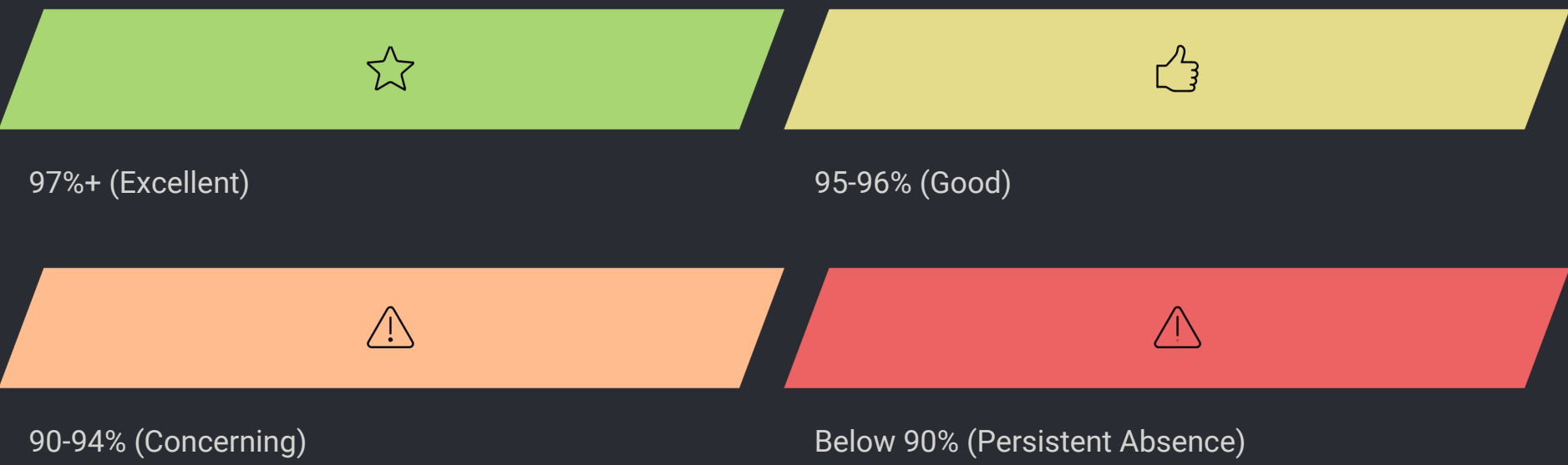
This indicates your child is missing around 11 to 19 days per school year, or one day every two weeks. Gaps are starting to appear in their learning and social development. At this stage, schools will initiate early conversations, inviting parents to discuss any challenges. This isn't punitive; it's to prevent further slippage, identify underlying support needs, and explore solutions together, such as signposting to external services or reviewing routines.



Below 90% Persistent Absence

This is when a child is missing one day in ten or more, equating to 19+ days missed in a school year. This level of absence significantly impacts learning and well-being. At this point, intensive support and a clear action plan become essential. Schools will arrange formal meetings, potentially involving the school's attendance officer, to develop a comprehensive support package. This could include targeted academic catch-up, mental health support, or practical assistance with transport or routines.

Visualising the Impact



Authorised vs. Unauthorised Absence: What's the difference?

These bandings consider all absences, but it's important to understand the distinction between authorised and unauthorised. An **authorised absence** is when the school has given permission for your child to be away (e.g., due to illness with a doctor's note, medical appointments, religious observance, or exceptional family circumstances approved in advance). An **unauthorised absence** is any absence where permission has not been granted by the school, or a reason has not been provided. While both types contribute to the overall attendance percentage, schools focus on reducing unauthorised absence and supporting families to ensure authorised absences are kept to a minimum wherever possible.

How Schools Use This Data: Beyond just numbers

Attendance is meticulously calculated and monitored by schools. This involves tracking every child's daily presence and absence, recording reasons and continuously updating their percentage. This isn't done for punishment, but as a vital tool for early identification. By observing individual and class-wide patterns, schools can quickly identify when a child's attendance starts to dip, when certain days are consistently missed, or if there are any emerging trends. This data then triggers the appropriate level of support and intervention, ensuring no child falls through the cracks.

Addressing Common Misconceptions:

- "Does one bad term ruin everything?"** No. Attendance percentages are usually calculated over the full academic year, meaning a period of poor attendance can often be improved with consistent effort in subsequent terms. Schools look at the overall picture and progression.
- "What if my child has a chronic condition or long-term illness?"** Schools are highly experienced in supporting children with ongoing medical needs. They will work with you to ensure absences related to these conditions are authorised, and will put in place support plans, such as home learning to minimise the impact on their education. Communication with the school is key in these circumstances.
- "My child is just anxious about school sometimes."** Mental health is a valid reason for absence. Schools are equipped to offer support for anxiety and other mental health concerns, including signposting to counselling or other specialist services. Openly discussing these challenges with the school can lead to effective strategies and support for your child's well-being and attendance.

Remember, our primary goal is to ensure every child feels connected, supported and has every opportunity to thrive at school. With early intervention and a strong partnership between home and school, we can absolutely turn things around together. We are committed to working proactively with families to remove barriers, providing tailored support and guidance to help every child re-establish consistent attendance and flourish both academically and socially.

Practical support for parents & carers

This is the page parents tell us they return to again and again. It's packed with practical, actionable guidance that makes a real difference. You don't need to navigate attendance challenges alone – these strategies work.

Your School Partnership Toolkit

01

Contact early: Don't Wait

At the very **first sign of reluctance** (e.g., "I don't want to go to school today" for more than 2 days), or if your child has missed **just one unexplained day**, reach out. Send an email to the class teacher/form tutor or call the school office immediately to flag concerns. This opens a dialogue before issues escalate.

02

Be honest & transparent

Schools are partners, not adversaries. If there are family stresses, mental health concerns, or specific anxieties your child is experiencing, **share them openly**. Phrases like: "We're noticing some anxiety around mornings, and I wanted to share so we can work together." or "There's been a change at home, and it seems to be impacting their desire to attend." build trust and help the school understand the root cause.

03

Know your contacts

Start with your child's **class teacher or form tutor** for daily updates and classroom-specific concerns. For recurring or more complex issues, contact the **school's attendance officer, pastoral lead, or SENCo** (Special Educational Needs Coordinator). Keep their direct email or phone number handy. If you don't know these contacts, ask the school office.

04

Share contextual information

Provide specific details that help the school tailor support. For example, mention: "They get very overwhelmed in busy corridors," "They're struggling with a particular friendship group," or "We've started a new medication which sometimes makes them drowsy in the mornings." This allows the school to implement specific adjustments, like offering a quiet route to class or a later start.

05

Prevent formal escalation

By engaging early and openly, you can prevent attendance issues from moving to more formal, legal stages (e.g., warning letters, penalty notices). Early partnership conversations focus on **support and solutions** (e.g., reduced timetable, in-school support, external agency referrals), rather than punitive measures. Your proactive communication is key to keeping the focus on your child's well-being.



Quick-Reference Checklist

- **Ask for priority learning:** What key lessons will they miss?
- **Re-establish routines:** Consistency is calming for children.
- **Focus on attendance before perfection:** Getting them in is the first step.
- **Celebrate small wins:** Every day at school is an achievement.
- **Keep communication open:** With school and your child.
- **Don't try to catch up everything at once:** Prioritise core subjects first.

Building strong routines at home

Consistent home routines are the bedrock of good attendance. They provide predictability, reduce stress, and help children feel prepared for the school day.



Consistent Sleep Schedule (Age-Specific)

Ages 5-12: Aim for 9-12 hours.
Set bedtime between **7:30-9:00 PM**, wake-up **6:30-7:30 AM**.
Ages 13-18: Aim for 8-10 hours.
Set bedtime between **9:00-10:00 PM**, wake-up **6:00-7:00 AM**.
Consistency helps regulate melatonin production, ensuring deeper sleep crucial for concentration and mood. Avoid screens for at least an hour before bed.



Visual Morning Routine Checklist

Create a simple checklist using pictures for younger children or bullet points for older ones, laminated or on a whiteboard. Include: **1. Get Dressed, 2. Eat Breakfast, 3. Brush Teeth, 4. Pack Bag, 5. Grab Coat/Shoes**. Display it prominently and practice the sequence. This empowers independence and reduces arguments, saving valuable time each morning.



Dedicated Homework/Study Time

Designate a consistent time, like **4:00-5:00 PM** right after a snack, or **6:30-7:30 PM** after dinner. Ensure a quiet, well-lit space free from distractions (no TV/phones). This signals that learning is a priority and helps avoid last-minute stress or forgotten assignments, reducing morning anxiety.



Weekend & Evening Planning Session

Every **Sunday evening**, take **15 minutes** to review the upcoming week as a family. Check school emails, pack lunches/snacks for Monday, discuss appointments, extracurriculars, and any known school changes or deadlines. This minimises surprises, allows children to mentally prepare, and ensures everything is ready for a smooth start to the school week.

Navigating morning anxiety & resistance

School refusal or anxiety can be incredibly challenging for both children and parents. Here are strategies to help ease morning difficulties:

You Don't have to do this alone: When and how to seek additional support

Don't hesitate to reach out if you feel overwhelmed or your child's attendance issues are persistent despite your best efforts. Early intervention is key.

Signs to look for that might indicate a need for more support:

- **Prolonged & Unexplained Absences:** Your child has missed **3 or more consecutive days** without a clear, authorised reason, or has a pattern of missing 1-2 days every week for a month.
- **Severe Emotional Distress:** Intense, persistent crying, panic attacks, or extreme withdrawal every morning before school, lasting **longer than 2 weeks**.
- **Significant Behavioural Changes:** New or escalating aggression, regression (e.g., bedwetting), or extreme mood swings occurring primarily on school days.
- **Declining Academic Performance:** A noticeable drop of **1-2 letter grades** (or equivalent) in multiple subjects directly coinciding with increased absences.



Who to contact & why:

- **School Pastoral Lead/SENCo:** For emotional support, in-school adjustments, anxiety management plans, or suspected learning difficulties.
- **School Nurse/Counsellor:** For health concerns impacting attendance, mental health support, or confidential discussions with your child.
- **Your GP (General Practitioner):** For medical assessment of physical symptoms, mental health diagnoses, or referrals to specialist services (e.g., CAMHS).
- **Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS):** For moderate to severe mental health difficulties like anxiety disorders, depression, or school phobia (often requires a GP or school referral).
- **Local Family Support Services/Charities:** For practical support with routines, parenting strategies, or accessing other community resources.

Managing illness decisions: When to stay home

It can be tough to know whether to send your child to school when they feel a bit under the weather. Here's a general guide:



Fever (38°C / 100.4°F+)

Keep them home if their temperature is **38°C (100.4°F) or higher**. They must be **fever-free for a full 24 hours without fever-reducing medication** (like paracetamol or ibuprofen) before they can return to school. This prevents the spread of infection.



Vomiting or Diarrhoea

Your child must stay home until **at least 48 hours after their last episode** of vomiting or diarrhoea. This strict timeframe is crucial to prevent the highly contagious nature of stomach bugs from spreading rapidly through the school community.



Contagious Conditions (e.g., Conjunctivitis, Chickenpox)

For conditions like conjunctivitis, keep them home until the discharge has cleared. For chickenpox, they must stay home until **all spots have crusted over** (usually 5-7 days from rash onset). Always follow specific school or health authority guidelines, and a doctor's note may be required for their return.



Minor Colds/Sore Throat/Mild Cough

If symptoms are **mild (e.g., sniffles, slight cough, mild sore throat)** and your child feels otherwise well and is energetic, they can usually attend. Ensure they practice good hand hygiene. Communicate with the school if symptoms worsen throughout the day or if you have any concerns.

Building resilience and positive attitudes

Fostering a positive mindset about school is a long-term strategy that helps children navigate challenges and embrace learning.



Celebrate achievements (Big & Small)

Acknowledge their efforts and progress daily. Say: "**I noticed how hard you worked on your maths today!**" or "**You were so brave going into school even though you felt nervous.**" This builds confidence, reinforces positive behaviours, and fosters a sense of accomplishment, encouraging continued engagement.



Encourage problem-solving skills

Instead of immediately solving every school-related issue, guide them: "**That sounds tricky. What do you think you could do about it?**" or "**Who at school might be able to help you with that?**" This empowers them to think critically, build independence, and develop coping strategies for minor challenges.



Foster a growth mindset

Teach them that mistakes are learning opportunities. Use phrases like: "**It's okay to not know everything right now; that's why we go to school!**" or "**Every time you try something new, your brain gets stronger, even if it feels hard at first.**" Focus on effort and persistence over innate talent to build resilience.



Actively support school engagement

Show genuine interest. Ask specific questions like: "**What was the most interesting thing you learned in history today?**" instead of just "How was school?" Attend school events (sports day, concerts, parent-teacher evenings), volunteer if possible, and engage with school communications. Your involvement signals that school is important and a shared family priority.

Catching up after absence

One of parents' biggest worries is their child falling behind after absence. Here's what really matters when your child returns to school:

Re-establish routines first

Don't try to catch up on everything immediately. Getting back into the rhythm of school days is more important than completing every missed worksheet.

Ask about priority learning

Teachers know what's essential versus what's supplementary. Focus your energy where it counts rather than overwhelming your child.

Know when not to rush

After illness or emotional difficulty, a gentle return often works better than pressure. Some learning gaps can be filled over time.

Use school support

Many schools offer catch-up sessions, intervention groups, or buddy systems. These are tools, not judgements.

Tailoring Support for Different Types of Absence

The approach to catching up can vary greatly depending on why your child was away from school. Consider these specific strategies:

Illness (e.g., flu, injury)

Focus on physical recovery first. Academic catch-up should be gradual. Prioritize rest and a gentle reintroduction to school work. For longer illnesses, the school may offer home learning or a temporary reduced timetable.

- Key:** Gradual return, physical well-being.

Anxiety/Emotional Difficulty

Emotional well-being is paramount. Avoid pressure to "catch up" immediately, as this can exacerbate anxiety. Work with school pastoral staff to ensure a supportive environment and focus on re-engaging with friends and routines before heavy academics.

- Key:** Emotional support, re-engagement, reduced pressure.

Family Emergency/Bereavement

Children need time to process significant life events. Be patient and understanding. Inform the school about the situation so they can provide appropriate emotional support and adjust academic expectations. Catch-up will be a long-term process, focusing on stability.

- Key:** Patience, understanding, communication with school.

Communicating Effectively with Teachers

Your child's teacher is your best resource. Proactive communication is essential for a smooth catch-up process:

01

Initial Contact & Information

Send an email to the class teacher/form tutor shortly before or upon your child's return. Briefly explain the absence (without excessive detail, if sensitive) and state your willingness to collaborate on catch-up.

02

Key Questions to Ask

Ask: **"What were the core learning objectives missed?"**, **"Are there any essential assignments or concepts that must be covered before an upcoming topic?"**, and **"What resources are available for catch-up?"** Avoid asking for 'all missed work' immediately.

03

Agree on Priorities

Work with the teacher to identify 1-2 key areas to focus on first, especially in core subjects (Maths, English, Science). This prevents your child from feeling overwhelmed by a mountain of missed content.

04

Follow-up and Feedback

Schedule a brief check-in a week or two after their return to see how your child is re-integrating and if the catch-up plan is working. Provide feedback on what's helping and what's still a struggle.

Age-Appropriate Catch-Up Strategies

Primary School (Ages 4-11)

For younger children, focus on:

- Re-establishing routine:** Predictability is key.
- Emotional check-ins:** Talk about how they feel about being back.
- Play-based learning:** Integrate missed concepts into games or creative activities.
- Short bursts of work:** 10-15 minute sessions are more effective than long ones.
- Reading together:** Maintain literacy skills.
- Celebrating small efforts:** Positive reinforcement for any engagement.

Secondary School (Ages 11-18)

Older children can take more ownership:

- Reviewing notes:** Encourage borrowing notes from classmates.
- Using online resources:** Many schools provide virtual learning platforms.
- Targeted study:** Focus on specific topics identified by teachers.
- Self-advocacy:** Teach them to ask teachers for help or clarification.
- Time management:** Help them create a realistic study schedule.
- Peer support:** Connecting with friends for missed information.

Managing your child's emotions & creating a home plan

It's natural for children to feel anxious, frustrated, or "behind" after absence. Your role is crucial in navigating these feelings and supporting a realistic plan.

Validate their feelings

Acknowledge their emotions. Say, "It's understandable to feel a bit worried about missing school," or "It must be frustrating to feel like you've fallen behind." Avoid dismissing their concerns, as this can make them withdraw.

Break down the catch-up

Together with your child and input from the teacher, break large catch-up tasks into small, manageable chunks. Instead of "catch up on maths," try "complete pages 10-12 in your maths workbook" or "watch the video on fractions."

Establish a realistic home plan

Designate specific, short "catch-up corners" or times at home (e.g., 20-30 minutes after school, or short bursts on the weekend). This should be separate from regular homework. Consistency is more important than duration.

Celebrate progress, Not perfection

Praise effort and progress, no matter how small. "You did a great job tackling that science assignment!" This builds confidence and motivation, reducing the feeling of being overwhelmed.

When to accept & let go

It's important to remember that not every single piece of missed work needs to be caught up. Sometimes, the pressure to achieve 100% catch-up can be more detrimental than the missed learning itself.

Focus on Core Concepts & Well-being

Prioritise understanding key concepts over completing every worksheet. If your child is struggling emotionally or physically, allowing some "gaps" in less crucial areas may be the best choice for their overall well-being. Schools often revisit topics, and foundational understanding is more valuable than rushed, superficial coverage.

Understanding emotionally based school avoidance (EBSA)

This term we're diving deep into one of the most misunderstood attendance challenges: Emotionally Based School Avoidance, or EBSA. If your child experiences genuine distress about school such as physical symptoms, overwhelming anxiety, or tearful mornings; you're not alone, and there *is* a path forward.

What it is

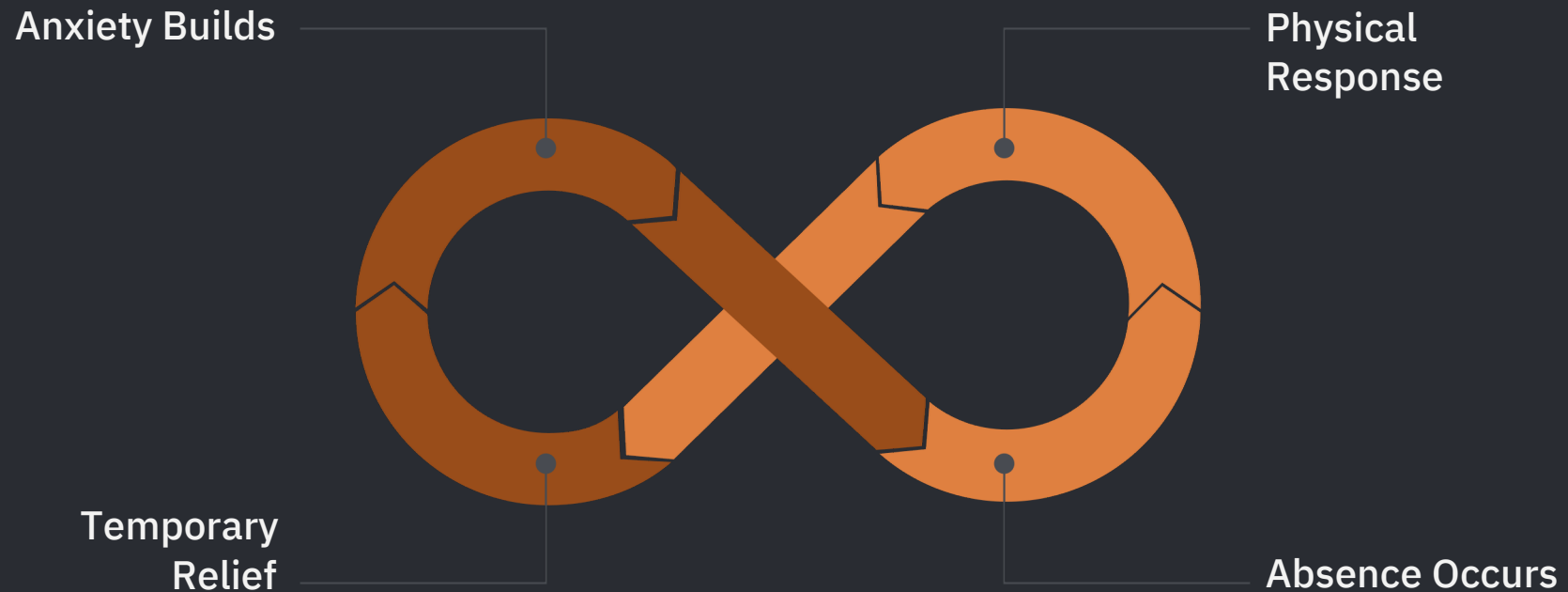
EBSA is severe emotional distress associated with school attendance. It's not truancy (which is a choice), and it's not school refusal (which implies wilfulness). Children experiencing EBSA genuinely feel they *cannot* attend, even when they want to. Physical symptoms are real: stomach aches, headaches, panic attacks, and overwhelming anxiety.

What families often experience

Mornings become battlegrounds. Your child might be fine in the evening but wake up overwhelmed. You might see physical symptoms that doctors can't explain medically. You feel torn between protecting your child and knowing they need to attend school. You worry about being judged as a "bad parent."

The EBSA Cycle

Understanding the pattern helps break it. EBSA creates a reinforcing cycle where temporary relief from staying home actually strengthens the anxiety about returning.



You're likely exhausted. You might be missing work. Siblings might be affected. And underneath everything, you can see your child's potential being held back by something invisible but very, very real.

What helps (and what doesn't)

What helps ✓

- Early identification and multi-agency collaboration
- Gradual, planned reintegration (not forcing)
- Identifying and addressing specific triggers
- Consistent routines with small, achievable goals
- Therapeutic support alongside educational planning
- Celebrating tiny steps forward Understanding EBSA
- as a symptom, not a choice

What doesn't help ✗

- Punishment or threats
- Assuming it's manipulation or attention-seeking
- Waiting for it to resolve on its own
- Ignoring underlying anxiety or trauma
- Pushing for full-time return too quickly
- Making school the enemy
- Isolating as a family
-

Partnership is everything with EBSA. Schools can adjust timetables, identify safe spaces, provide key-adult support, and create graduated return plans. Parents can maintain morning routines even on difficult days, communicate openly about what's happening at home, and follow through on agreed plans consistently.

"What helped us wasn't pressure; it was someone listening and making a plan with us. We stopped feeling judged and started feeling supported." Parent

If your family is experiencing EBSA, please reach out to school. You're not alone, and there is a way forward.

Parents' voices, your questions Answered

Every month, we share anonymous reflections from parents and carers who've navigated attendance challenges.

These aren't success stories designed to make you feel inadequate – they're honest accounts of what worked, what didn't, and what helped families move forward.

“

"What helped us wasn't pressure — it was someone listening and making a plan with us. We stopped feeling judged and started feeling supported."

— *Parent of Year 8 student with anxiety*

”

“

"I thought asking for help would make things worse. Actually, the school had strategies I'd never thought of. I wish I'd contacted them sooner."

— *Parent of Year 5 student*

”

“

"The small steps approach felt frustratingly slow at first, but looking back six months, the change is remarkable. Consistency really does work."

— *Parent of Year 10 student with EBSA*

”

Your questions answered

Each term, we tackle the questions parents are really asking. Here are this term's responses:



What if my child is anxious every morning?

Morning anxiety is extremely common and doesn't mean you're doing anything wrong. Consistent routines help: same wake-up time (even weekends), visual schedules, and avoiding lengthy negotiations. Keep mornings calm and predictable. If anxiety persists despite routines, contact school ; they may identify triggers you can't see from home, or recommend additional support like counselling or an anxiety management plan.



How do medical appointments affect attendance?

Medical appointments during school hours are authorised absences when evidenced and unavoidable. However, schools will encourage you to book appointments outside school hours where possible, and to return your child to school after appointments rather than keeping them home all day. For ongoing medical needs, discuss a healthcare plan with school so everyone understands your child's requirements.



When should I worry about attendance?

If your child's attendance drops below 95%, or if you notice patterns (certain days, certain lessons, physical symptoms), it's time to have a conversation with school. Early intervention prevents entrenchment. Trust your instincts; if you're worried, reach out. Schools would always rather support early than intervene late.



Can I take holiday during term time?

Head teachers can only authorise term-time holidays in exceptional circumstances. Unauthorised holiday absence can result in penalty notices. We understand the financial pressures families face, but term-time holidays disrupt learning and can trigger attendance concerns that affect future opportunities.

Looking Ahead

Next term's Focus

Punctuality and Morning Anxiety

– Why those extra 10 minutes matter, and practical strategies for smoother mornings

Share Your Story

Have an attendance experience you'd like to share anonymously? Contact us through your child's school to contribute to future editions

Ongoing Support

Remember: support is always available. You don't have to wait for the next newsletter to ask for help

This newsletter exists to build community, share knowledge, and remind you that you're not navigating attendance alone. We're here, we're listening, and we're committed to working in partnership with every family.

Additional Resources & Next Steps

Beyond this termly newsletter, comprehensive support exists to help you and your child maintain positive attendance. Here are trusted resources and clear next steps for different situations.

Key Contacts



School First Contact

Your child's class teacher (primary) or form tutor (secondary) is always the best starting point for attendance concerns



Attendance Officer

For ongoing attendance monitoring, pattern discussions, and coordinating support plans across school



Pastoral Lead

For emotional wellbeing concerns, safeguarding matters, and complex family circumstances



SEND

For special educational needs, health plans, reasonable adjustments, and coordinating external agencies

What Happens Next?

If you're concerned about your child's attendance right now, here's your action plan:

- 

Contact school today

Don't wait. Early conversations open doors to support before patterns become entrenched.
- 

Be honest about barriers

Schools can only help with what they know about. Share the full picture.
- 

Agree a plan together

What will you do at home? What will school do? What are the review dates?
- 

Follow through consistently

Even when it's hard. Small steps forward are still forward movement.
- 

Review and adjust

Plans should evolve based on what's working. Regular communication keeps everyone aligned.

Thank you for reading

We know you're doing your absolute best for your child. Parenting is the hardest job there is, and when attendance becomes challenging, the pressure intensifies. Please remember: asking for help is a sign of strength, not failure. Early support prevents crisis. Partnership creates possibility.

"Every child deserves the opportunity that education provides. Every family deserves support to make that happen. Together, we open doors."

 **Next term:** Punctuality and Morning Anxiety – practical strategies for smoother starts to the school day



Availability

Responds during business hours



Purpose

Advice on Attendance, SEND and inclusion

Professional attendance resources designed for schools and families working in partnership.

Making attendance support accessible, professional and genuinely helpful.