

SUPPORTING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WITH EBSA

At Shropshire SENDIASS, we are committed to empowering families with the information and support needed to navigate challenges related to school attendance. This leaflet aims to provide you with essential information on the roles of schools, Local Authorities (LAs), and health services in supporting pupils with Emotional-Based School Avoidance (EBSA).



MENTAL HEALTH ATTENDANCE GUIDANCE

Schools have a responsibility to support children whose mental health issues, such as anxiety or depression, impact their ability to attend school. There is non-statutory guidance that outlines best practices for schools to support pupils experiencing mental health-related school avoidance.

Guidance includes strategies such as creating a supportive environment, offering flexibility with attendance, and working closely with families to address individual needs.

LOCAL AUTHORITY (LA) DUTIES FOR PUPILS WITH MEDICAL CONDITIONS

Under **Section 19 of the Education Act 1996**, the Local Authority must provide alternative education to children who are unable to attend school due to medical conditions, including mental health conditions like anxiety or depression.

If a child is likely to be absent for **15 days or more**, the Local Authority is required to provide **suitable alternative education**. This ensures that children continue their education, even when they are not physically attending school.



CASE LAW ON MENTAL HEALTH AND EDUCATIONAL PROVISION

In the **Upper Tribunal case of DC & DC v Hertfordshire CC (2016)**, the court clarified the types of mental health interventions that should be considered educational provisions:

- **Mindfulness training and Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT):** These interventions help pupils manage anxiety and are considered educational provisions. They should be included in **Section F of an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)**.
- **Hypnotherapy for self-harm:** This was not considered educational and should not be included in an EHCP.

This case highlights the importance of ensuring that educational and therapeutic supports that help manage mental health are appropriately recognized in EHCPs.

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

It is important that Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) and Local Authorities collaborate to support children and young people with EBSA.

While CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) is responsible for medical interventions, it is the joint responsibility of **schools** and **Local Authorities** to make sure that **mental health support is tailored to facilitate education and school attendance**.





KEY TAKEAWAYS FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

- **Schools** must support pupils with mental health-related attendance issues. This includes adapting school environments and attendance expectations where necessary.
- **Local Authorities** are required to arrange alternative education if a child is absent for 15+ days due to anxiety or other mental health needs.
- **EHCPs** should include mental health provisions in **Section F** if they are educational and help the child manage their anxiety within an educational setting.
- **Joint working** between the Local Authority, Integrated Care Boards (ICBs), and CAMHS is crucial to ensure children and young people with EBSA receive the appropriate support.

