

# SCHOOL ANXIETY IN CYP WITH SEND

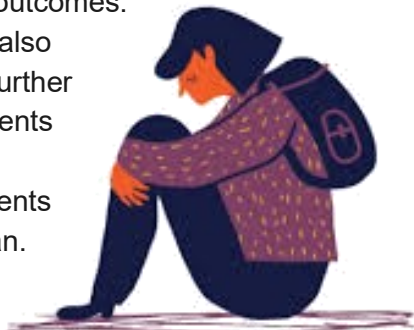
SENDIASS Leicester Publication

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For children with SEND, **anxiety** and **sensory overload** are common factors affecting behavior and attendance. If you think there may be underlying needs, discuss and explore with school how these might be identified and supported.

### Things you can do:

- Ask your child what they find **difficult** and what they would **like to change**—this can help identify **triggers and worries**. Your child’s view should always been the starting point of any discussion about support.
- Speak to the **school** (look at page 2 for some ideas of what to ask for)
- Speak to the **school nurse** or your child’s **GP** for advice, recommendations or a referral to specialist services. Share this information with the school
- If your child has an **Education, Health and Care Plan** and they are refusing to attend the named school, you can **request an early Annual Review**. This will give you the opportunity to let the LA know about attendance difficulties and discuss progress being made towards outcomes. You can also request further assessments and/or amendments to the plan.



### Signs of Anxiety

- Selective mutism
- School Refusal/Avoiding social situations
- Sleep problems, nightmares, insomnia
- Mood changes, tantrums, crying, clingy
- Physical symptoms—headaches, dizziness, sweating, panic attacks, stomach problems
- Problems eating/drinking

### Reasons why your Child may be Refusing School

- Particular subjects, situations, teachers and/or students
- Is your child experiencing bullying?
- Are they experiencing sensory overload? Noises, scents, lighting?
- Changing classrooms (such as moving between lessons) being too busy, getting lost or confused
- Organisation stress (for example, missing equipment)
- Exam stress

Contact SENDIASS Leicester if your child has Special Educational Needs (diagnosed **and** undiagnosed).



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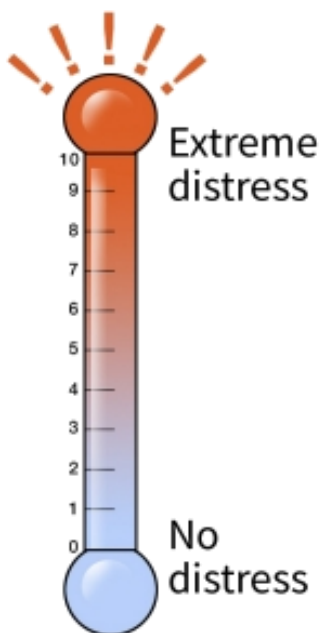
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Some ideas for **support strategies** that you can raise with the school:

- **Meet and greet** by a trusted member of staff at the start of the day
- Adult-led approaches, regularly checking with a child that they are okay throughout the day
- Help to **understand** and **manage** their **feelings** and **emotions**
- Positive praise (such as, for getting through a lesson. Replacing sanctions for challenging behaviour and focussing on the positive instead)
- “Time-Out” card for when they feel overwhelmed in lessons
- Changes to timetable if particular lessons are a trigger
- Learning away from the classroom in a dedicated area/”safe
- Lunching away from the dinner hall, lunchtime clubs, “safe space”
- 1:1 or small group interventions, support programmes, anxiety or friendship groups
- Leaving lessons/school 5 minutes early to avoid crowded corridors



When meeting with the school, you can discuss your child’s **support plan**.

You can also ask about a referral to one of the following:

- Counselling (in school or out of school)
- CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service) for further assessment and support, such as an Educational Psychologists and Clinical Psychologists
- Home tutoring
- Social Workers
- Other outside agencies

Contact SENDIASS Leicester if your child has Special Educational Needs (diagnosed **and** undiagnosed) and you are concerned about their Anxiety and/or School Refusal. We can offer impartial help and advice to ensure that your child receives the appropriate help and support.



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