

Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA)

'EBSA occurs when stress exceeds support, when risks are greater than resilience and when 'pull factors' that promote non-school attendance overcome the 'push' factors that encourage attendance' (Thambirajah et al. 2008, p.33)

Signs

- Significant difficulty in attending school due to emotional factors
- Sporadic attendance, prolonged absences, complete withdrawal
- Children can still be attending school and experiencing EBSA
- High levels of anxiety (internalised or externalised)

EBSA is a description of need not a diagnosis.

Consideration of class, culture and ethnicity.

Changing the language from refusal to avoidance.

Resources and strategies

Norfolk County Council have a wealth of resources, including recorded webinars and toolkits, to help school staff better understand EBSA, as well as practical resources to use with children.

<https://www.schools.norfolk.gov.uk/teaching-and-learning/wellbeing-in-education/emotionally-based-school-avoidance>

