


## What parents \& Educators Nesd to Know about SCHOOLANO/DANCE

Emotionally Based School Avoidance is a term used to refer to reduced attendance
or non-attendance at school by a child or young person. It's often rooted in

UNDERSTANDING SCHOOL AVOIDANCE emotional, mental health or wellbeing issues. The rate of children who miss school more than $10 \%$ of the time in England has more than doubled since before the pandemic: rising from $10.9 \%$ in 2018-19, to $22.3 \%$ in 2022-23.

## REASONS FOR ABSENCE <br> School avoidance is sometimes underpinned by several factors rather than one single cause. This could include something going on for the child or young person within the family or at school. A child may have caring responsibilities school. A child may have caring responsibilities at home, for instance, or a change in family dynamics; bullying and friendship difficulties at school; pressure to achieve in schoolwork and school; pressure to achieve in schoolwork and exams; or moving from primary school to secondary school.

## PATTERNS OF ABSENCE

You may notice patterns in regular absences or children regularly expressing that they do want to attend school (particularly being child or young person is neurodiverse, there is some evidence to suggest there are more aspects of school life which can cause distress - such as changes in the environment, changes of routine and sensory stimuli.

## COMPLAINTS ABOUT

 PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS sustained school avoidance over time. Further this, the longer a pupil is out of education, the more likely it is that there is a rise in their making need to avoid the activity which is making them anx
to stay at home.

## Advice for Parents \& Educators

## WORK TOGETHER

## MANAGING OVERWHELMING FEELINGS

If there's a concern about a child's absence and emotional wellbeing, it's important that there is clear communication and a consistent approach between the child's parents and the schooi, so you can take a child-centred approach together towards a plan of support or reintegration. This ensures a consistency of approach from both home and school, creating better outcomes for the child.

While there may be times you feel frustrated or angry, try to stay calm; acknowledge the child's worries, iisten and discuss a range of coping strategies together to help them face the discomfort and overwhelming feelings. These could include mindfulness, deep breathing or going for a walk and practice the strategies in less overwhelming situations first.

## FOLLOW REGULAR ROUTINES

Children can benefit from a regular and consistent routine. This could be c morning routine, from waking up and having breakfast through to getting dressed, packing their bag and leaving the house. A consistent evening routine which is calm and limited time on screens can also give children much needed predictability and familiarity. Schools can help create a timetabled routine for


## REDUCE STIMULATING ACTINITIES AT HOME

If a child is avoiding school, reduce their access to more stimulating activities (such as watching television, playing games and spending time with friends) (such as watching television, playing games and spending time with friends)
during school hours, where possible. This reduces the potential for the child having during schooi hours, where possible. This reauces the potentiai for the chila having avoiding school.

## Meet Our Expert

With 30 years' experience as a teacher, trainer, consultant and interim executive board member, Anna Bateman has a superb understanding has also advised the Department for Education and ieadership. She has also adv
green paper.


