

Information Gathering from parents with prompts

School staff may find it helpful to use these themes and question prompts during the initial meeting with parents. Sensitivity and active listening skills will be crucial at this stage.

Theme	Possible questions
Family dynamics It can be helpful to gain an understanding the young person's life journey and significant events which may have impacted upon their lived experiences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could you describe your family? Or draw your family tree? • Who is X closest to in the family? Has this always been the case? • Have there been any changes within the family recently? Or are there any upcoming changes in the near future? • Was anything different in your family at the time that you noticed X's difficulties increasing? • Have there been any significant life events that X has experienced? Or any important losses/bereavements/long-term illness? • When X does not attend school, how does this impact upon the family? What are you doing if X does not go to school?
Strengths, interests and aspirations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is X good at? What do they like doing? • Do they have any hopes for the future? Do they know what they want their life to be like when they are an adult?
Developmental and educational history	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What was X like as a young child? • Can you tell me about their early experiences at school? The primary school, at the start of secondary school?
Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does X talk about any other children? What does s/he say? • Does X talk about any adults within school? What does s/he say? • Who does X get on with...who doesn't X get on with? • Does X interact with other students out of school? • Which friendship groups are significant?
Academic progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School should be aware if the young person has identified SEN needs and should ask about these needs and the support in place. • If there is no identified SEN school should ask if they have any concerns, or if the child has spoken about difficulties.
Behaviour and symptoms of anxiety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When X is worried what does it look like? • What do they say they are feeling? • Is X's sleeping and eating affected?
The child's view – fears and worries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has X spoken to you about what X finds difficult about school? What do they say?
The child's view – going well in school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has X mentioned anything that is going well in school? (e.g. teachers, lessons, friends)
Typical day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does a typical day look like for X / yourself when they do/do not attend school? • Take me through it, what happens from the moment they wake, to the moment they sleep...
Parental views on the reasons for EBSA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why do you think X has difficulty attending school? (ask each parent separately) • If (other parent/ sibling/Grandparent) were here what would they say? • Are there any differences of views about the reasons and what should be done within the family?
Exceptions These questions can help shift the focus away from the presenting problem, to consider aspects within a situation which are working well or supporting the young person not to get worse.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell me about the times when X is not feeling X • Tell me about the times when X is feeling less X • Tell me about the times when X has coped well • Tell me about the days/times of day when you think something has gone well for X. What is different during these times? • Tell me about the times when X has managed to go to school. What was different about these times? • Tell me what other people have done that has been useful/helpful for X.
Previous attempts to address the problem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What has helped in the past when things have been difficult? • What strategies have been most helpful so far in managing their anxiety?