

Pupil voice

Timetable review

A tool often used by adults working with students showing school anxiety is to offer CYP the opportunity to review their timetable and places around school, identifying which lessons and areas are associated with a lot, some, or no anxiety. Using a red, amber and green anxiety code may help. Bear in mind that some CYP may experience anxiety just by thinking about some lessons / lunchtimes / break times / transition to or from school and may need the support of an empathetic adult during this activity. Exploration of the issues arising from this can provide useful information.



	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
1	SA C212	SB E212		SA G203	SA C209
2	SA C212	SB E212		SA G203	SA C209
3	SA G203	SA G203	SA G204		SA C209
4	SA G203	SA G203			SA C209
5		SA C209		SA G203	SA C209
6		SA C209		SA G203	SA C209
7		SA C209		SA G203	SA C209
8		SA C209		SA G203	SA C209
9		SA C209		SA G203	SA C209
10		SA C209		SA G203	SA C209

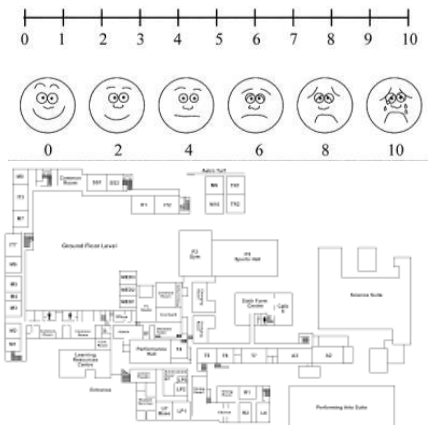
Collaboratively agree upon a code, for example:
 Green = I am happy here or I enjoy this subject
 Amber = I feel ok here or I find this subject alright
 Red = I feel uncomfortable here or I do not enjoy this subject

Images taken from the Solihull guide

Anxiety thermometer or scale



Using an anxiety thermometer or scale can help the young person to start to make links between their emotions and environmental/contextual triggers. Consider the physical environment (toilets, hall, corridors, changing rooms, outside), times of day (arrival, home time, break and dinner times) and specific lessons and activities (reading aloud, group work, writing, tests). Using a map of the school building can be helpful when exploring the impact of the physical environment on their anxiety.



Card Sort: Function of School Avoidance

I have bad feelings about school (e.g., scared, nervous, sad) when I think about school on Sunday and

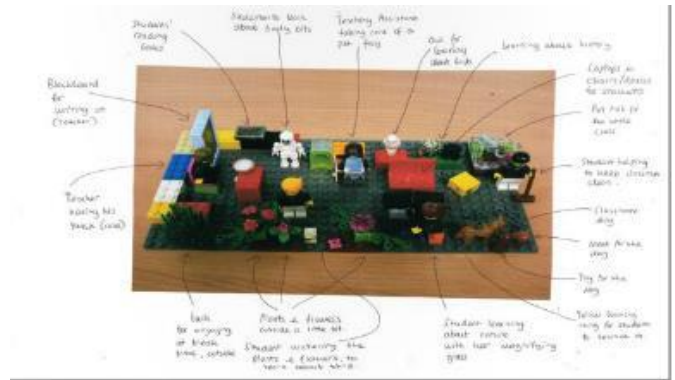
I stay away from school because I do not have many friends there

I would rather be with my family than go to school

This card sort activity, based on a School Refusal Assessment Scale developed by Kearney (2002), has been devised by Sheffield EPS as a tool for staff to use to develop a greater understanding of a young person's school avoidance. The 24 statements are colour-coded by the function of behaviour identified by Kearney and Silverman (1990). The cards and guidance on how to use them with a CYP can be found in [Appendix 5a](#).

Ideal Classroom/School

This tool developed by Williams and Hanke (2007) can be used to gain an insight into which features of the school (people, environment, lessons etc.) young people would like to change and why. This activity can be undertaken using Lego, play equipment and/or drawing. There is a tutorial video for the Ideal self here <https://www.drawingtheidealschool.co.uk/> alongside a manual with instructions and questions. Guidance and a script for using the Ideal School with a CYP can be found in [Appendix 5b](#).



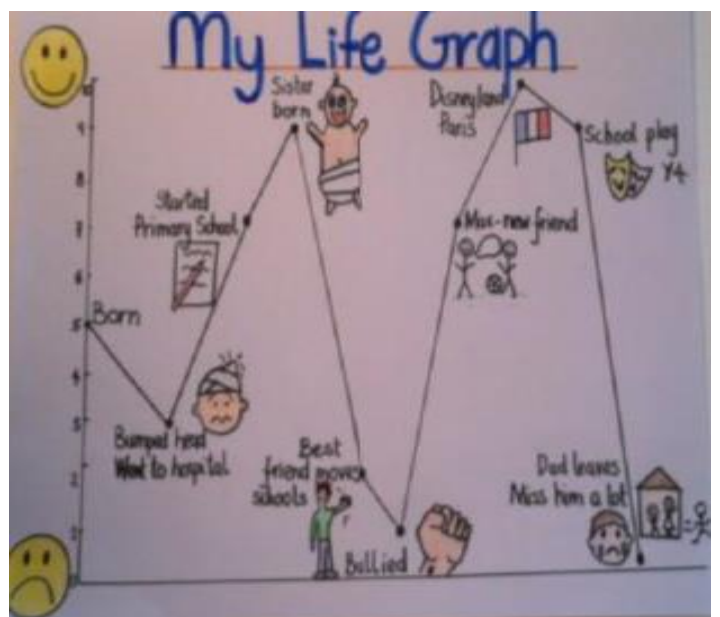
School Stress Survey

School Stress Survey			
☹️ I very often or always feel stress at this. I can't cope with it.		😐 I sometimes feel stress. I don't like it but I can cope.	
☺️ I feel OK about this. I can cope with it easily.			
1. Getting up & ready 	2. Journey To & From 	3. Assembly 	4. Corridors
5. Written Work 	6. Break Times 	7. Teacher Q&A 	8. Team / Group Work
9. Lunch Times 	10. 1 to 1 with Adults 	11. Tests 	12. Homework

This short survey can be used to help the young person identify potential triggers in the school day and environment. The full survey can be found in [Appendix 5c](#) or visit <https://www.tes.com/teaching-resource/school-stress-survey-6386627>

Life Graph

Collaboratively developing a life graph or path with the young person may help them to consider when their EBSA started, what else was happening in their lives at this time, what events and experiences led up to this point and how they interpreted these, as well as looking at what they would want in the future.



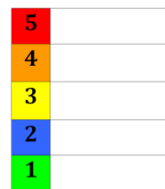
Talking to the CYP

A good example of a set of scripts to use to gather the child's view comes from the Solihull guide and can be found in [Appendix 5d](#). There are also many school-based resources available to ascertain the voice of the CYP on the Sheff Kids website.

<http://www.sheffkids.co.uk/adultssite/pages/communicateworksheets.html?LMCL=ZVCth>



5 point scale



The 5 point scale already used in many schools can be used as a way of supporting CYP to understand and manage overwhelming feelings. It can be used with CYP of all ages and begins with an exploration of emotions. CYP can then use the scale to describe how they are feeling, and what these feelings may look or sound like; they can explore situations that may make them feel a certain way and move to describing how to reduce overwhelming or difficult emotions. The scales that the CYP makes can be used as a communication tool for example, making into a keyring or using different coloured cards or bracelets to let adults know that they feel a certain way.

There are free downloadable resources available at <https://www.5pointscale.com/>

Externalisation

It can sometimes be helpful to support the CYP to externalise the anxiety, so that the CYP can start to view their anxiety as separate from their essential self. This is a great opportunity to get creative and have fun using paints, playdough, clay and collage materials as you explore the anxiety with the CYP. You could try asking:

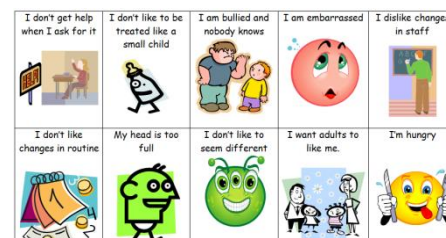
- What would you call the feeling you have when you think about going to school?
- If your anxiety was a 'thing', what would it look like?
- Can you draw/paint/make it? What would it say?
- How does ... get in the way of you coming to school?
- When is ... in charge and when are you in charge?

Multi Element Plan (MEP) cards

These cards can be used flexibly to explore the young person's view of themselves in relation to school and to identify potentially helpful and unhelpful environmental factors. The cards can be found on page 36 of the following document from Derbyshire County Council 2008:

<http://www.em-edsupport.org.uk/Pages/Download/0eeb08d2-0ae6-4f11-94b8-764f5c283cfb>

Sheffield Educational Psychologists can use an on screen version with CYP.



Gathering the view of parents and carers

Building a collaborative partnership with parents is often essential to bring about positive outcomes for a young person experiencing EBSA. Some parents may find conversations around their child's difficulties challenging, so establishing a curious, empathetic and no-blame approach is important. There is an information leaflet that can be shared with parent carers in [Appendix 6b](#).

Sensitively collecting background information, parent's views and information about the current situation can be collated in an initial meeting. See [Appendix 7](#) for suggestions of questions and areas to cover. It is helpful for schools to identify a member of staff as a key point of contact who will be able to communicate regularly with parents and to agree how and when this communication will take place.

Task Instructions

Read through your section of the pupil voice task sheets

Through considering a young person you have worked with or Alison's case study – which activity might you be best placed to either use in your role or suggest a colleague use?

What do you like most about the activity?

Which would you feel most comfortable using? Why?