

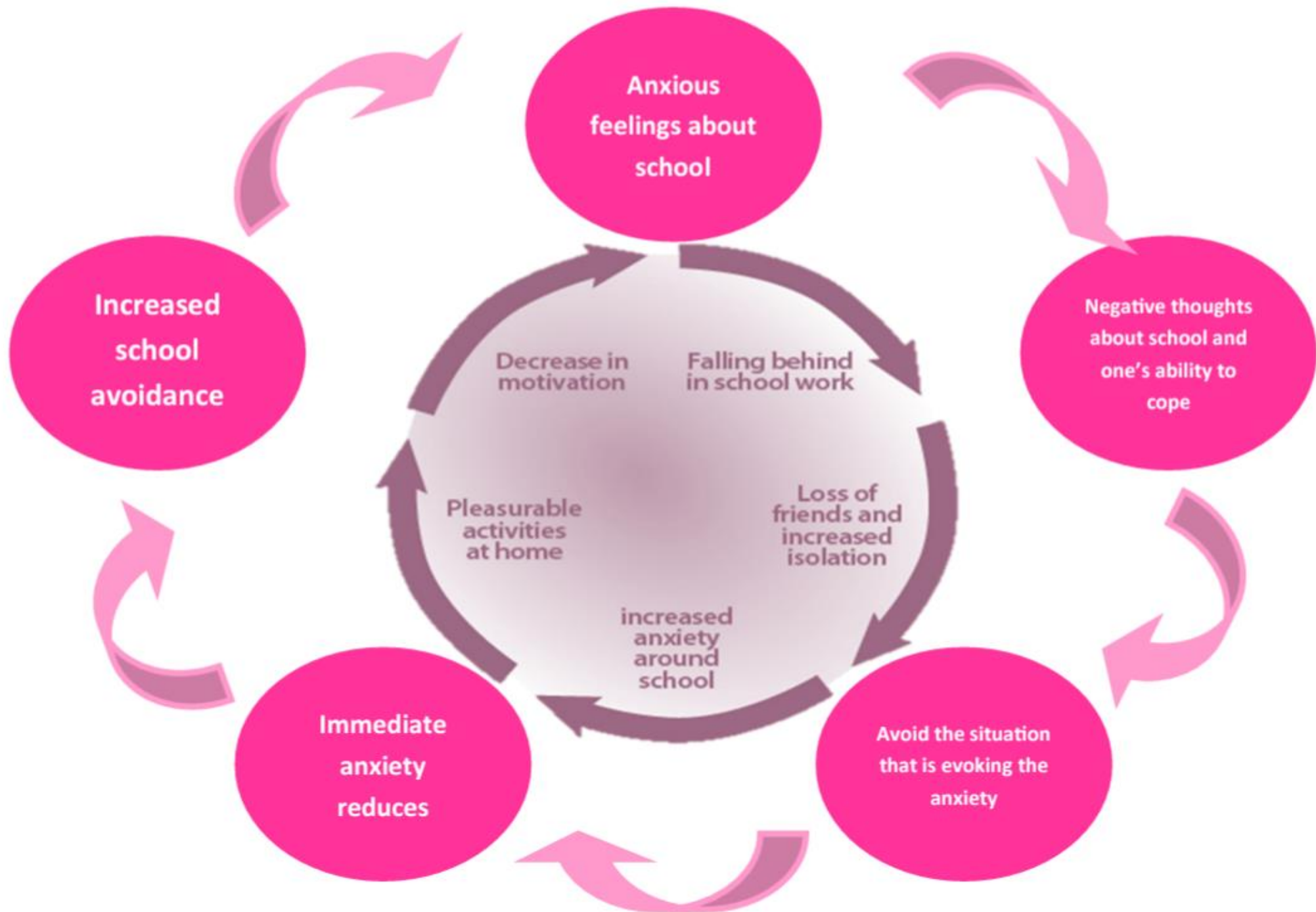
EBSA Parent Drop In 16.01.26

- Agenda:
 - **Step 1: Understanding the term EBSA**
 - **Step 2: Whole school approach**
 - **Step 3: Assessing individuals at risk of EBSA**
 - **Step 4: Gather assessment information**
 - **Step 5: All key parties working together to develop a shared understanding of the situation**
 - **Step 6: Develop an EBSA plan**
 - **Step 7: Implement the plan!**
 - **Step 8: Review and Learn**



Step 1: Understanding the term EBSA

Emerging- Level One	Established- Level Two	Entrenched- Level Three
<p>The Child or Young Person (CYP) has been attending school but shows occasional reluctance to attend and/or is anxious about attending school. Occasional absences from the school day or certain lessons may occur.</p>	<p>The CYP displays periods of sporadic absence which are increasing. Patterns may be found within these periods of non-attendance. Reluctance to attend school is noted by parents.</p>	<p>The CYP is absent from school over an extended period of time. They are reluctant to attend school and their negative feelings about school can feel strong and intense.</p>



Cause



There is no single cause for EBSA, and it is often underpinned by a number of complex and interlinked factors, including the young person, the family and the school environment (Thambirajah et al, 2008).

However, Kearney and Silverman's (1990) review of the literature indicate that there tends to be four main reasons for school avoidance:

1

To avoid uncomfortable feelings brought on by attending school, such as feelings of anxiety or low mood.

2

To avoid situations that might be stressful e.g., academic demands, social pressures and/or aspects of the school environment.

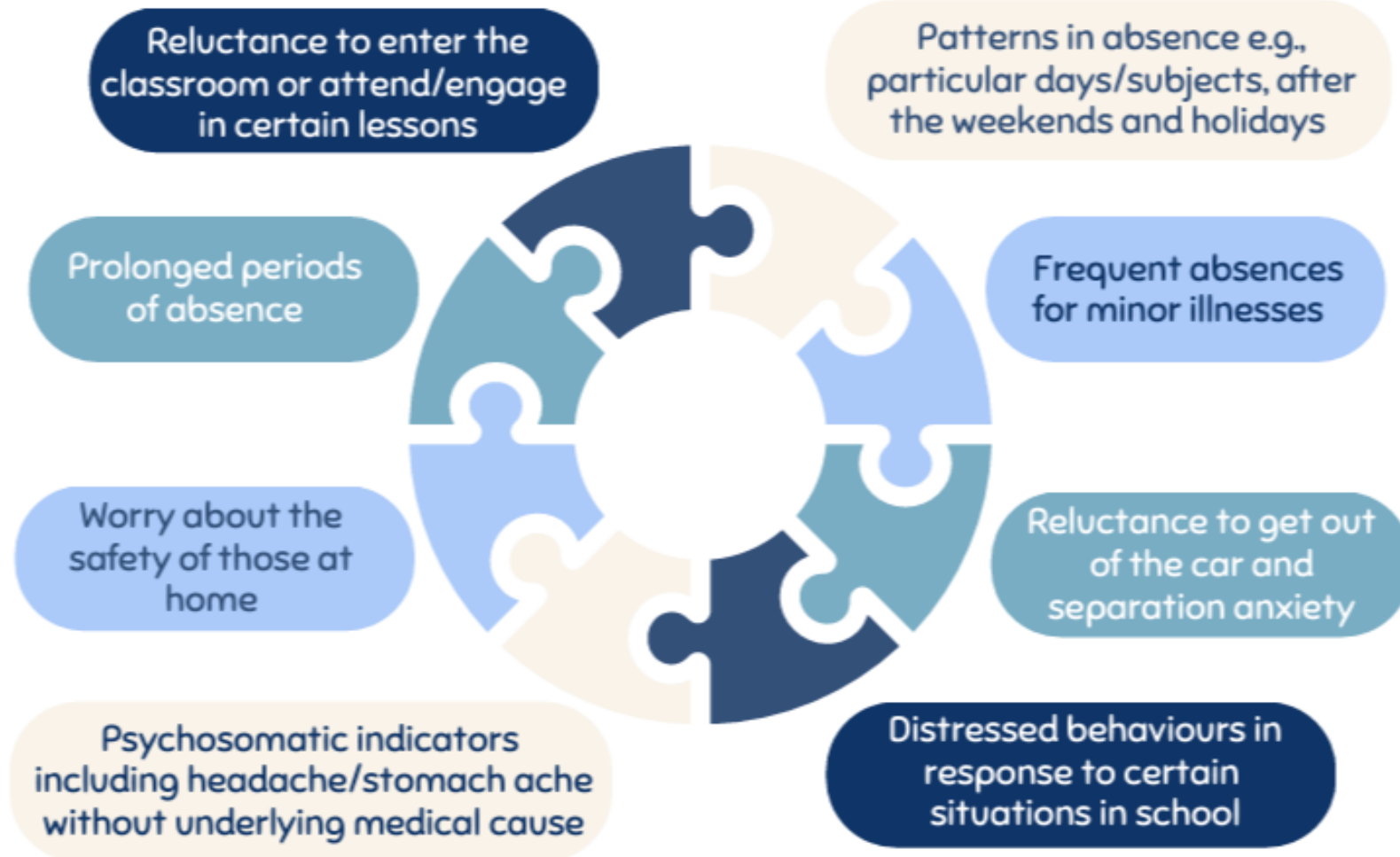
3

To reduce separation anxiety or to gain attention from significant others, such as parents or other family members.

4

To pursue tangible reinforcers outside of school, such as going shopping or playing computer games during school time.

Potential indicators of EBSA



Anxiety and EBSA

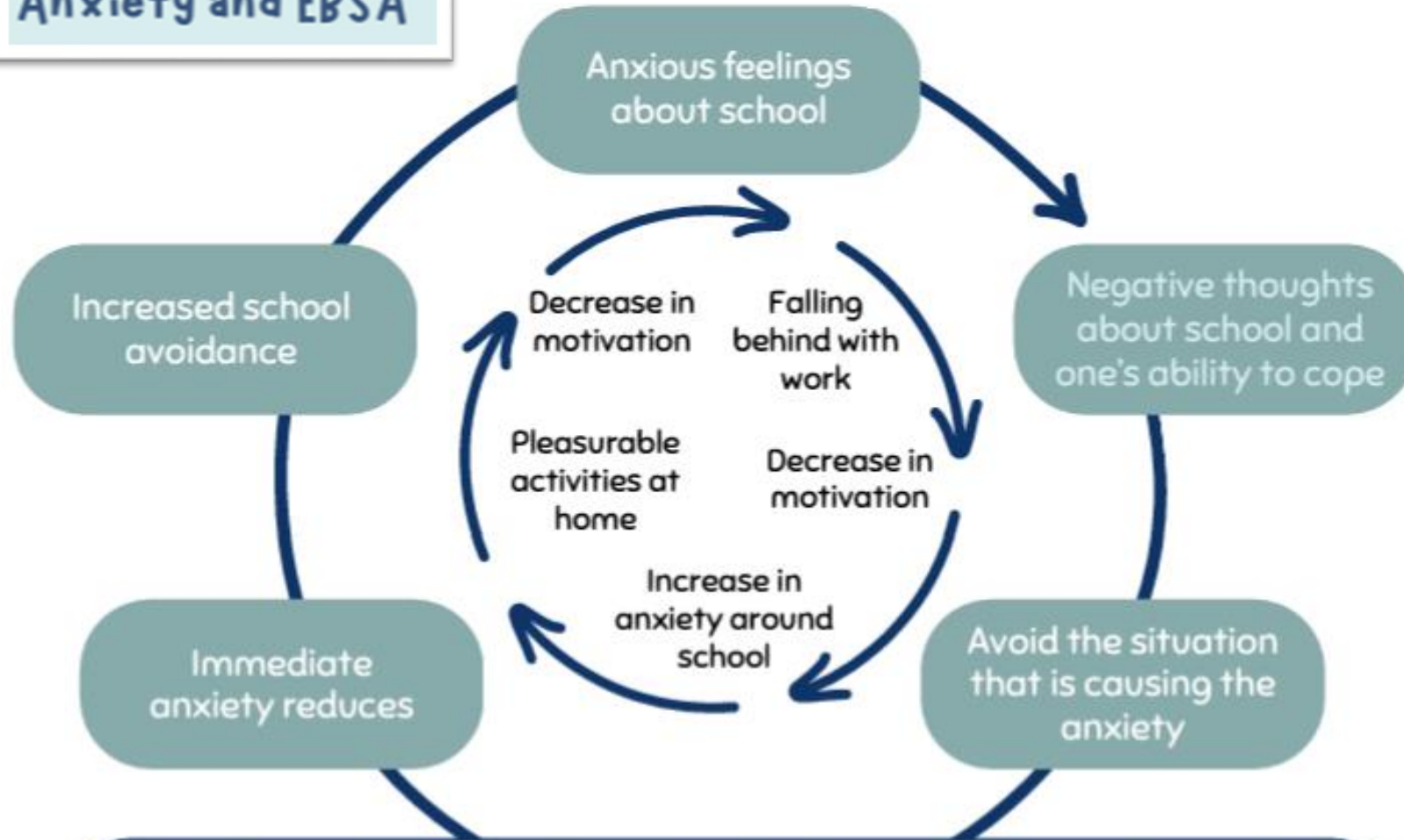


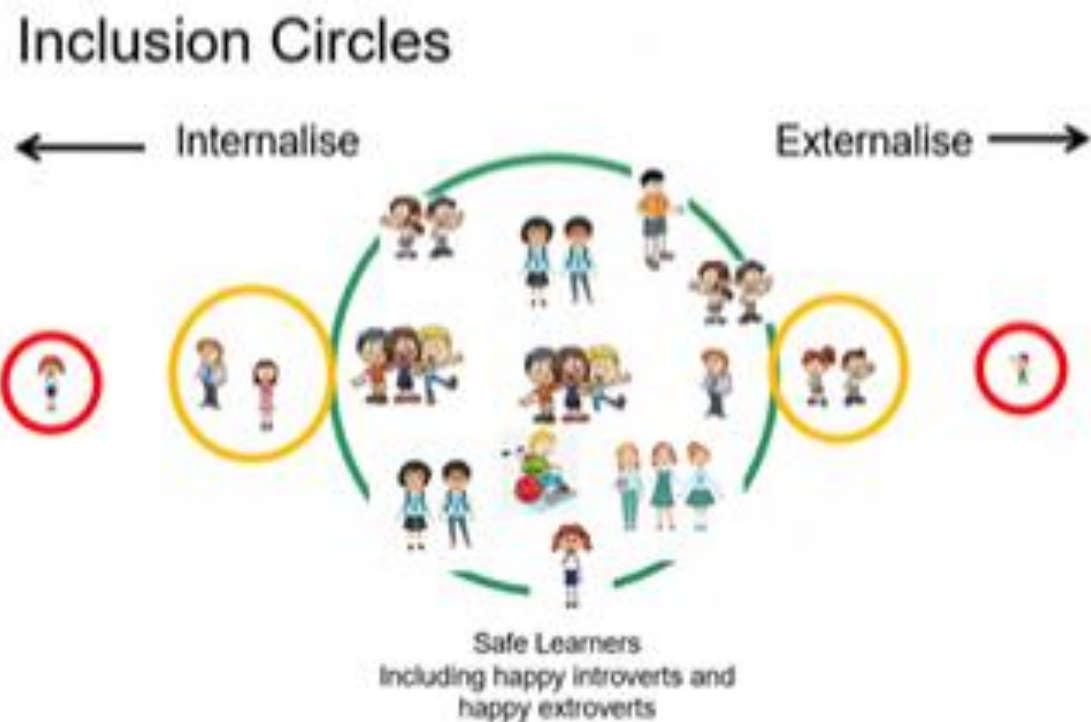
Figure 1. Diagram showing the initial anxiety causing the non-attendance and the secondary maintenance factors. Note. Reprinted from Emotionally Based School Avoidance, Good Practice Guidelines for Schools and Support Agencies (p.6), by W. Sussex EPS, 2018 www.westsussex.gov.uk. Reprinted with permission.

Step 2: Whole school approach in place



Inclusion Circles

This visual illustrates inclusion circles, where the central green circle represents "safe learners," fostering a supportive environment for both introverts and extroverts. The outer yellow and red rings depict varying levels of connection, with individuals in red being more isolated. The arrows labelled "Internalise" and "Externalise" show how pupils may either withdraw inwards or act outwards based on their social or emotional state.



Step 3: Assessing individuals at risk of EBSA

Overarching risk factors associated with EBSA

School Factors	Family Factors	Child Factors
Bullying	Change in family dynamic	Fear of failure
Transition	Parental physical or mental health needs	Low self-esteem
Subject difficulties	Loss or bereavement	Learning needs and/or neurodiversity
Structure of the school day	High levels of family stress	Separation anxiety
Academic demands	Family history of EBSA	Traumatic events
Peer/staff relationship difficulties	Young carer	Physical illness

Risk factors associated with EBSA – Transition

- To meeting lots of new children and young people
- To subjects being departmentalised, how they are timetabled, different teacher approaches
- Different journeys

- To greater pressure placed on attainment
 - To having to move around school to different classrooms
- To new staff and staffing structures

- To being grouped in classes for subjects
 - From being the oldest in primary to youngest in secondary
- To different pastoral system/support



Adjustment to new environment

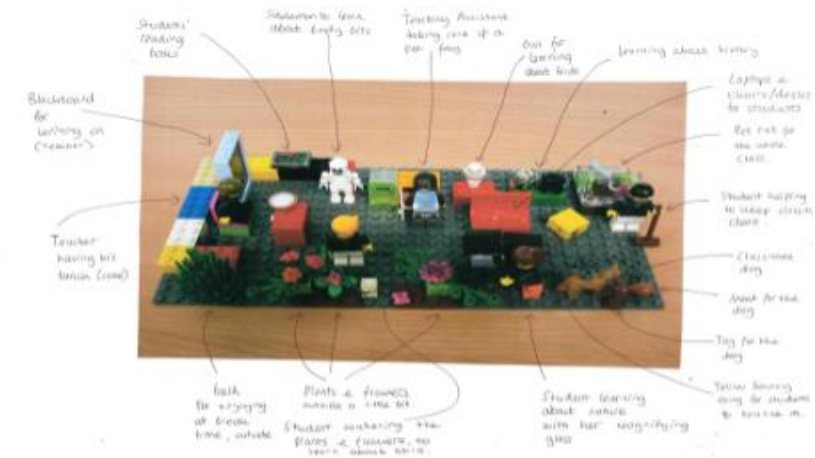
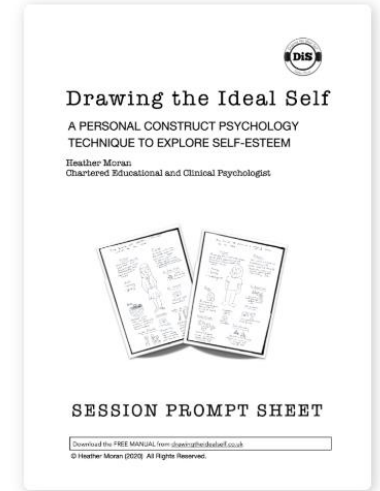
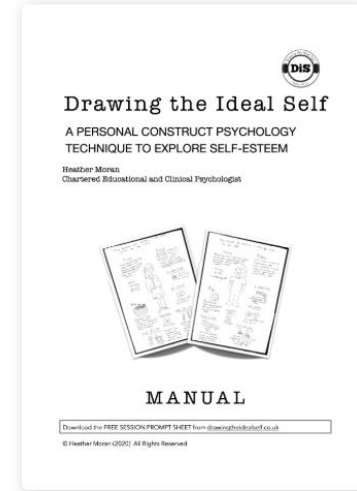
Risk factors associated with EBSA – EBSA and Autism

Research found that 92.1% of those with school attendance difficulties were neurodivergent and 83.4% were autistic.

Protective factors associated with EBSA

School Factors	Family Factors	Child Factors
Sense of belonging	Positive experiences where the young person succeeds	Ambitions, aspirations and motivation
Positive relationships with peers and staff	Interaction and partnership with school and other professionals	Confidence, self-esteem and self-efficacy
Feeling listened to and understood by school staff	Feeling listened to and understood by family	Understanding link between thoughts, feelings & behaviour
Flexibility of approach in school		

Step 4: Gather assessment information



Step 5: All key partners working together to develop a shared understanding of the situation

A clear description of the behaviour



Risk factors (at the child, home and school level)



Strength and protective factors (at the child, home and school level)



Formulation and integration of all the factors as they are currently presenting



Step 6: Develop an EBSA plan

Direct telephone contact between parent/carers and key workers in school. Agree expectations regarding frequency of contact and set realistic response time.

A return to school at the earliest opportunity.

All parties to agree to actions and keep to them until the next review period.

Early home visits if appropriate to discuss the young person's reluctance to attend school.

Ensuring young person has access to identified member of staff who can be approached if anxiety becomes temporarily overwhelming in school (i.e., key worker).

A personalised programme for each young person (e.g., flexible timetable, arrangements for transport, buddying, and provision of a safe haven).

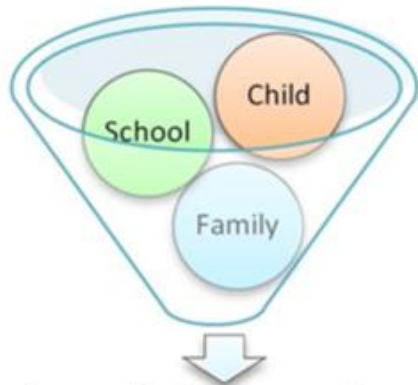
Ensuring all staff (including supply staff) are informed about the young person's difficulties, particularly during changes of classes/key stages.

Identifying a member of staff for the young person to 'check in' with throughout the day.

Identifying a safe place or base in school that the young person can go to if needed.

Considering whether or not a family assessment such as an Early Help Plan would be helpful to identify whole family support.

Intervention



School Attendance

Going into lunch hall without best friends (support)

Going into lunch hall with best friends (support)

Going into next 2 favourite lesson

Going into favourite lesson

Joining in a small group activity

Staying in the resource base

Entering the school going into reception area

Entering the school when school is closed

Standing outside the school when school is closed



1. To avoid something or situations that elicit uncomfortable feelings or high levels of stress



2. To escape difficult social situations



3. To get attention from or spend more time with significant others



4. To spend more time out of school as it is more fun or stimulating



Step 7: Implement the plan!

1

Be realistic in your expectations of progress and work at a manageable pace for the CYP including an appropriate level of challenge. Be mindful that the CYP will experience significant levels of anxiety as they first come back to school. Consider a gradual increase in expectation (e.g. time in school, time in lessons) based on progress (plan, do, review). Ensure all steps are negotiated and agreed with the CYP and that school reintegration moves at the right pace for them.

2

Ensure all staff supporting the CYP are aware of the plan and have scripts for responding to any distressed, difficult, or dangerous behaviours. Consistency in responses will be important in developing trust and helping the CYP to feel safe in school. All staff supporting the CYP should follow the agreed plan until the next review period; their views should be sought ahead of the review meeting.

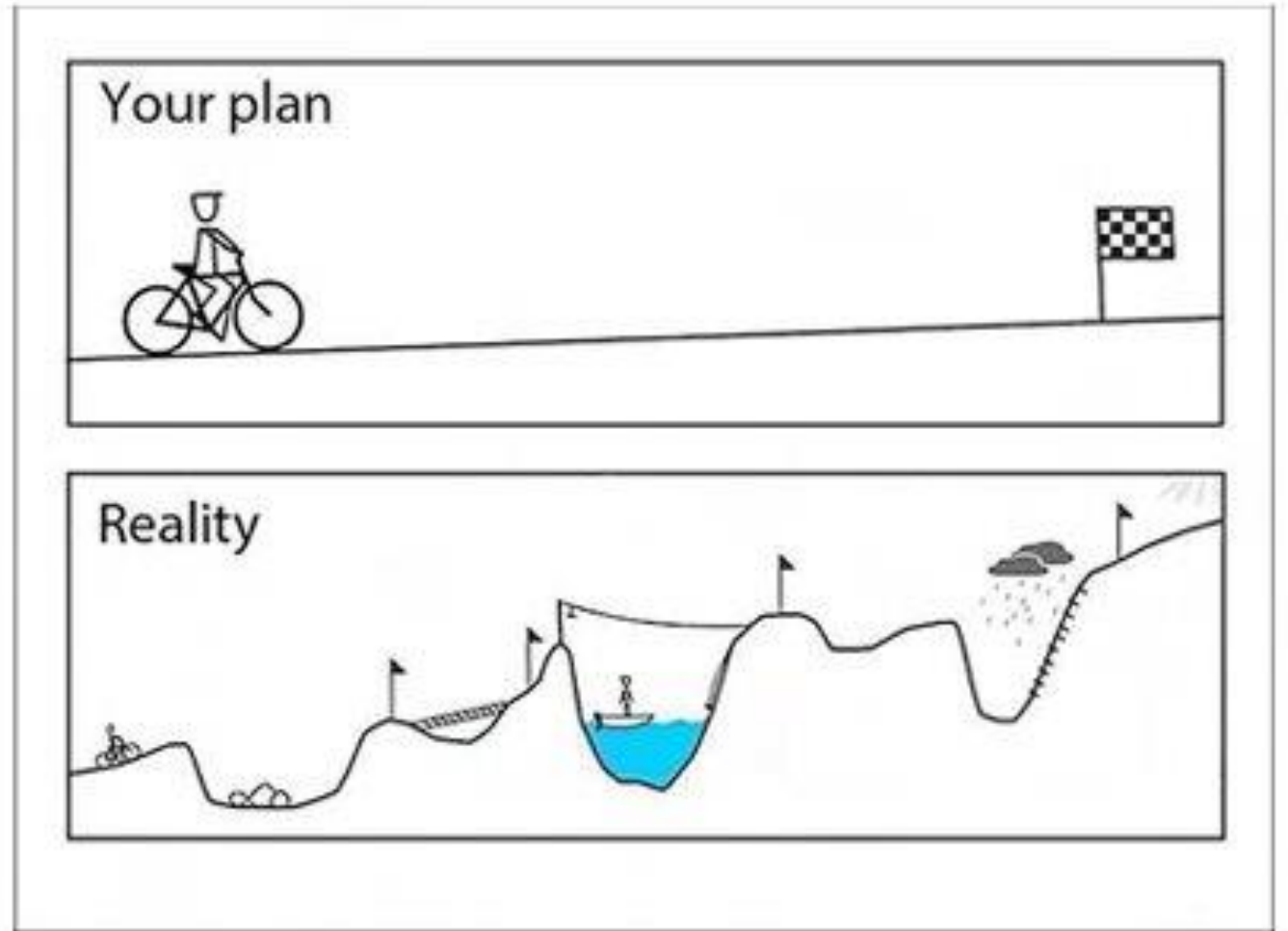
3

Ensure parents are supported and included within the implementation process. Help them to establish routines that mirror a typical school week prior to the CYPs return such as a regular sleep wake schedule and meal times.

4

Ensure that the CYP has opportunities to build trusting relationships with key members of staff. Regular check-ins with key members of staff should be timetabled and time to discuss areas of interest and moments of success should be highlighted.

Step 8: Review and Learn



Entrenched EBSA

