

Help us raise parent carer voices on EBSA in Derbyshire



We know that emotionally based school avoidance (EBSA), sometimes described as school refusal driven by anxiety or distress, can have a profound impact on children, young people, and their families. Many parent carers have told us how challenging and isolating this experience can be.

To help us build a clearer picture of what families are experiencing across Derbyshire, we are running an anonymous EBSA survey for parent carers of children and young people who:

- have experienced EBSA,
- are currently struggling with school attendance due to anxiety or distress, or
- have previously had difficulties attending school regularly.

Why we are asking for your views

The information you share will help us to:

- understand how EBSA presents for children and young people locally,
- identify what is (and isn't) working in school and service responses,
- highlight barriers families are facing when trying to access support,
- raise evidence-based issues with schools, services, and the local area, and
- push for meaningful improvements for children experiencing EBSA.

Your responses will directly inform our conversations with decision-makers and strengthen our collective voice. At the heart of this work is one key question:

what changes would you need to see to know that things have genuinely improved for your child and family?

About the survey

The survey includes questions about:

- your child or young person (age, education setting, EHCP status),
- your family's experience of EBSA and how it has affected attendance,
- support offered by schools and external services,
- how absences related to EBSA have been recorded, and
- the impact on your child's wellbeing and your family life.

We've chosen a questionnaire format because we know parent carers are time-poor and juggling a lot, and this can often feel like the quickest and easiest way to share experiences. There are a mix of tick-box questions and optional open-text sections, so you can share as much or as little detail as feels right for you.

If you feel the survey doesn't quite capture your experience, or that we've missed something important, please do tell us. This is your forum, and we want to hear your feedback not only about EBSA, but about how we are amplifying parent carer voices.

The survey should take around 10–15 minutes to complete.

Confidentiality

- All responses are anonymous.
- Any information you provide about schools or services will not identify you or your child.
- Your honesty will help us build a realistic picture of EBSA in Derbyshire.

Who should complete the survey?

You are welcome to take part whether:

- your child is currently out of school,
- they attend irregularly,
- they are still attending but struggling significantly, or
- EBSA is something your family has experienced in the past.

Even if you are unsure whether your child's difficulties would be described as EBSA, your perspective is still valuable.

[Click here to complete the survey](#)

What will happen next?

We will share what we learn with parent carers first, because our accountability is to you. We will then use the findings to: Work with services and partners to inform wider service and system improvements.

We know that system-level change can feel frustratingly slow, and we want to be honest about that. But please know that we will continue to use your experiences to challenge, push, and advocate. We've got your back, and we are committed to feeding back to you about what we're raising and where progress is (and isn't) being made.

If you have any questions about the survey or would like support to complete it, please get in touch with us at info@derbyshireparentcarervoice.org

Thank you for taking the time to share your experiences and help us work towards better understanding, better support, and better outcomes for children and young people experiencing EBSA.