



Statement

Grantham Additional Needs Fellowship and the Governors are committed to providing a full and efficient education of all pupils. Regular attendance is essential to allow children to fully access the curriculum. To this end Grantham Additional Needs Fellowship and the Governors will do as much as they can to ensure that all pupils achieve maximum possible attendance and that any problems, which may impede full attendance, are acted upon as quickly as possible.

Aims

All pupils of statutory school age have an equal right to access an education in accordance with National Curriculum regulations, therefore;

- It is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure attendance at school as required by law
- Situations may exist beyond the control of parents/carers and pupils which may need to be addressed in partnership by Grantham Additional Needs Fellowship and external agencies

Expectations

Parents/carers and pupils can expect the following from the Fellowship:

- Regular, accurate and efficient recording of attendance
- Prompt contact with parents/carers when a pupil's absent if no message is received by telephone or no prior notice has been given, this is on a daily basis and is recorded
- Immediate and confidential action on any problem notified to the Fellowship
- Encouragement and tailored support to pupils towards good attendance
- Bespoke support plans for pupil's that are unable to access school for reasons such as medical recovery etc

The Fellowship has the following expectations from parents/carers:

- That they ensure their child attends school regularly
- That they will contact the school by telephone or in person at the start of the first day of absence; whenever their child is unable to attend school
- That they will ensure their child arrives in school on time and prepared for the school day
- That they will contact the school, in confidence, whenever any problem occurs that may keep their child away from school
- To avoid, where possible, taking any planned absence during term time
- They will inform the Fellowship of any planned medical procedures/circumstances that may result in a child's long-term absence to ensure an appropriate support plan can be established
- That they will inform the school of any planned appointments in advance and provide evidence of an appointment if necessary.

The Fellowship has the following expectations from pupils:

- That they attend school regularly
- That they arrive at school on time and are appropriately prepared for the day
- That they will inform a member of staff of any problems or reasons that may hinder them from attending school

Responding to Non-Attendance

Parents and carers are expected to ring and inform the school if a child is going to be absent. On the day of the absence, if a telephone call or prior notice has not been received from parents/carers the receptionist will;

- Attempt to contact parents/carers by telephone to obtain an explanation for the absence, this will be logged and monitored



- If parents/carers are non-contactable the pupil's emergency contacts will be contacted to enquire about the absence
- If there is no response by 11:00am, the Senior Leadership Team/Safeguarding and Pastoral Team will determine whether it is necessary for a staff member to carry out a home visit on the day of absence
- If a pupil is absent long term, a bespoke support programme will be established with the safeguarding and pastoral team and, where appropriate, fortnightly home visits will be carried out
- If a pupil is admitted to hospital, the Fellowship will liaise with parent/carer and the hospital to determine the most appropriate course of action to support the child's recovery, education and reintegration into school

School Organisation

For this policy to be successful every member of staff must make attendance a high priority and convey to the pupils the importance of attendance in accessing the quality education being provided. This means staff will arrive to lessons on time and be well prepared.

Specific responsibilities allocated to staff:

Local School Board:

Ensure that the school adhere to statutory government guidance

Receive regular attendance progress reports in preparation for Local School Board Meetings.

Headteacher:

To oversee the implementation of the attendance policy

To report to the Local School Board

To support the Attendance Champion with parent/carer meetings where there has been an ongoing attendance concern

Make a formal request to the Local Authority and issue a fixed penalty notice where there is sustained and unresolved persistent absence

Organise a parent/carer and young person (if applicable) meeting taking place after this notice/fine.

To oversee the reintegration process and plan for the return of long-term absences including reintegration meetings following a fixed term suspension.

Attendance Champion and/or Safeguarding Team

Monitor, produce and analyse whole school attendance data

Report to the Headteacher for all attendance matters

Initiate contact with parents in cases of prolonged explained and unexplained absence to enquire where support can be provided to encourage their child's return to school where indicated.

Make fortnightly home visits with pupils that are absent from school long term

Liaise with parents/carers regarding pupil's attendance concerns

Produce attendance letters and analysis of attendance figures when required

Liaise with stakeholders regarding a pupil's attendance concerns

Maintain up to date records of attendance analysis and consequent interventions and actions to address identified absence patterns and/or persistent absentees

Liaise with pupil's SEND caseworkers regarding any changes to a child's circumstances that may impede their regular school attendance

Liaise with the Attendance and Inclusion Team and refer to the Education Welfare Service when necessary

Class Tutor:

To complete registers accurately and on time both AM and PM

To record any reasons for absence in pupil planners on the registers

To inform the safeguarding and pastoral team of any concern



Administration Team:

Update registers onto School Pod

Note telephone messages and mark absence accordingly in registers

Highlight irregular absence and inability to contact parent/carer to Senior Leadership Team/Safeguarding and Pastoral Team

Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

The Department for Education has deemed **pupil's with attendance less than 90% are 'persistent absentees'** and follow up is necessary.

What is an Authorised Absence?

Authorised absence is where approval has been given in advance for a pupil to be away, or the school has accepted an explanation offered as a satisfactory reason for absence. All other absence must be regarded as unauthorised. The following may be reasons for authorising absence:

- Illness
- Family bereavement
- Medical or dental appointment
- Days of religious observance
- Fixed term exclusion
- Permanent exclusion until removal from roll or reinstated

As an organisation we ask that we are informed of any unavoidable absences as soon as possible and we reserve the right to ask for evidence of appointments such as doctor's appointments.

What is an Un-Authorised Absence?

Absences are unauthorised when the explanation for an absence is deemed an unsatisfactory or unnecessary reason to be absent from school. Absences will not be authorised under the following circumstances:

- Family holidays unless there are exceptional circumstances
- Shopping trips/birthday outings
- No parent/carer communication
- Lateness; arrival 30 minutes after registration closes without parental explanation

Irregular Attendance/Refusal to Attend

Parents/carers of pupils of compulsory school age are responsible for making sure their child receives a full-time education and can be prosecuted for Irregular attendance under the Education Act 1996 Section 444 (1). Where a child has not attended regularly at school the Local Authority have the options of issuing a fixed penalty notice in respect of the parents of the child, bringing proceedings before the family courts for an Education Supervision Order or prosecuting the parents under Section 444 before the Magistrates Court. Fixed Penalty Notices can be issued for persistent lateness where the child arrives after the closure of registration.

As a Fellowship we endeavour to support all of our pupils to attend school every day, we therefore ask that parents/carers act upon any concerns they have regarding their child's attendance and contact the school at the earliest opportunity to prevent any attendance issue worsening.

The Local Authority's Code of Conduct and details on Fixed Penalty Notices can be located at:

<https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/council-business/fixed-penalty-notices-code-conduct/print>



What is good attendance?

Attendance is categorised as below;

Attendance Percentage	Category of Attendance
95%+	Good attendance
91%-94%	At risk of persistence absence
80%-90%	Persistent absence
51%-79%	At risk of severe absence
Less than 50%	Severe absence

Reintegration

The return to school for a pupil after a long-term absence requires special planning therefore support programmes will be tailored to the pupil's individual needs and may involve phased or part time re-entry with support in lessons and/or at home as appropriate.

Leave of Absence

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 have removed the reference of holidays during term time and now provides that a leave of absence during term time will only be granted where an application is made in advance to the school and the school consider that the leave of absence should be granted due to exceptional circumstances relating to that application. The onus is on the parent/carer to present the case in writing at least two weeks before the event. Retrospective granting of permission, should only therefore be on rare occasions.

Removal from Roll

The Fellowship will only remove pupils from roll when this has been agreed by the local authority. In the instance a change of school placement is required an emergency review will be held with parents/carers to change the named school on the pupils Educational Health Care Plan.

Parents/carers moving out of the area are required to inform their child's SEND caseworker of this as the earliest opportunity, and inform school in writing detailing their new address, proposed last day in school, new school, if a placement has been found, and potential schools if a placement has not been confirmed.

Elective Home Education

Whilst the local authority encourages parents/carers to enrol their child at school, they also recognise that parents/carers have an equal right to educate their child at home. The local authority wishes to work with parents/carers who home educate in order to ensure that those children are provided with efficient, fulltime education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs which they might have. It also wishes to ensure that parents/carers who choose to electively home educate their children, do so for the right reasons and have an intention to educate at home from the point they remove their child from school.

If parents/carers have a desire to home education their child we as a fellowship ask that the headteacher is informed of the parents/carers intention to home educate their child in writing. The school will initiate a meeting with parents/carers, and the child if appropriate to discuss their decision and provide a copy of the local authority's 'Elective Home Education' leaflet, if a meeting does not take place a copy of this leaflet will be sent home to parents/carers. The school will notify the Elective Home Education Team and the child's SEND Caseworker of such notification and parents/carers will be required to demonstrate, to the local authority, that they have considered the educational needs of their child and how they will meet these needs in the immediate and long-term future. A child can only be removed from roll on the grounds of Elective Home Education when this has been agreed by the local authority.



Children Missing Education

Arrangements for identifying and maintaining contact with children missing, or at risk of going missing, from education are paramount.

As defined in the Section 436A of the Education Act 1996, CME are children of [compulsory school age](#) who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. This includes children who are awaiting a school place and children in receipt of unsuitable education, including those children local authorities are supporting to place into suitable education.

Our school recognises the entitlement that all children have to education and will work closely with the local authority to share information about pupils who may be missing out on full time education or who go missing from education. The local authority will also be informed where children are to be removed from the school register a) to be educated outside the school system; b) for medical reasons; c) because they have ceased to attend; d) because they are in custody; d) because they have been permanently excluded.

We also recognise that children who go missing is a sign that they may have been targeted by Child Sexual Exploitation perpetrators and/or drug related criminals (County Lines). Children may also be groomed into participating in other forms of criminal exploitation including cybercrime, serious violence and violent crime. All cases of children missing education will be reported to Lincolnshire County Council.

Emotional Based School Avoidance (EBSA)

Emotional Based School Avoidance (EBSA) is a term used to describe a child or young person who has severe difficulty in attending school due to emotional factors. This can result in prolonged absences from school.

EBSA can occur suddenly or develop gradually over time. Behaviours can also range from occasional reluctance to attend school to complete avoidance resulting in non-attendance. EBSA should not be thought of as a deliberate act of defiance as it is a complex issue with no single cause. Reasons are often complex and multi-faceted across environmental factors (both at home and school) as well as individual child factors. There are a number of risk factors that can influence EBSA. These can include, but are not limited to, difficulties with managing and regulating emotions, low levels of self-confidence or self-esteem, high levels of family stress, relationship difficulties or academic demands. It is often the interaction between risk factors (across school, family and child or young person) that results in EBSA behaviours.

While risk factors have been identified that place children at greater risk of EBSA, it is important to also consider, identify and build areas of strength or resilience available for the child, family and school. These resilience factors help to protect children and young people from maintaining EBSA behaviours, and promote successful school inclusion. Resilience factors can include, but are not limited to, emotion regulation strategies, motivation for change, willingness to work in partnership and an openness and commitment to trying to understand how the child or young person may be different and how this may affect them at school.

Anxiety may be the triggering, but also a maintaining factor of EBSA. The greater the avoidance of situations that cause fear or distress, the more difficult it will become to deal with it. With each individual situation, it is therefore crucial for all stakeholders to work together with the child or young person and their family and as early as possible to understand why the child or young person is reluctant to attend school.

EBSA Pathway

Lincolnshire's EBSA Pathway clarifies what schools can expect of the local authority and what the local authority must expect from schools in relation to these duties. This, in turn, guides all stakeholders, not least children and families, in understanding what support they should expect to receive, when, where and from whom. The EBSA Pathway is a graduated response (follows an assess, plan, do, review cycle) that is focused on:

- meaningful and robust early intervention through effective whole school systems.
- clear understanding of individual needs and contexts.
- collaborative, person-centred working with parent and carers and the child or young person.



The pathway considers each stage of EBSA, from indicators of risk of EBSA, through early indicators of EBSA to EBSA occurring, and provides steps to be taken.

The EBSA pathway is a wraparound approach of proactive support. Throughout this is the emphasis on the need for a return to school, alongside support strategies and interventions and adaptations within the school and home environment. See appendix 2 for further information regarding the EBSA pathway.

Reduced Timetable

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interests, there may be a need for a temporary reduced timetable to meet their individual needs. A reduced timetable will only be in place for the shortest time necessary and will be regularly reviewed with the pupil and their parents/carers with the intention of reintegrating the pupil to attending full time.

In the event of a reduced timetable being implemented a meeting will be held with parents/carers and the pupil to discuss and agree an action plan.

All reduced timetables will be reported to the Local Authority upon implementation and review.

Rewards for good attendance

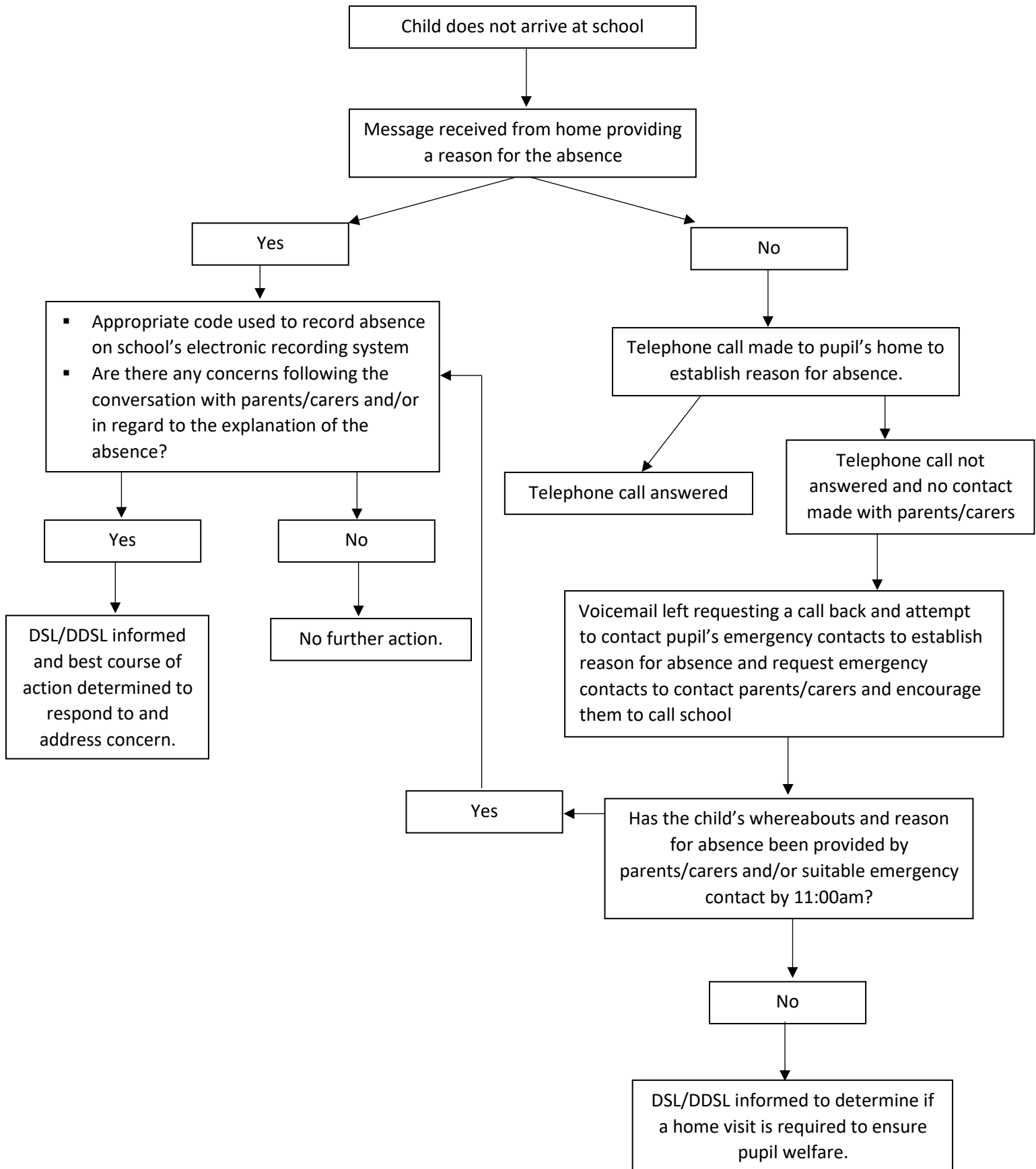
At the end of the year a certificate is awarded in the main school's assembly to all pupils with 100% attendance

Pupils who achieve 100% attendance throughout a 12-week term will receive a certificate

Interesting fact: 'if a pupil was absent from school for two weeks every year from their reception year to 18 years of age, they would miss the equivalent of one whole year's school education'



Appendix 1: Responding to Pupil Absence Flowchart





Appendix 2: School Register Codes

The DfE. offers a comprehensive set of register codes which all schools are required to use. These codes are as follows:

Attendance Code	Reason for Code	Category of Absence
/	Present in school AM	Present
/	Present in school PM	Present
L	Late arrival before the register is closed	Present
C	Leave of absence granted by the school -only granted in exceptional circumstances i.e.; a pupil is participating in a performance. a pupil is subject to a reduced timetable	Authorised Absence
H	Leave of absence for the purposes of a family holiday -this must be requested via an 'Application for Student Absence' form in advance of the requested absence. This leave will be granted where there are exceptional circumstances based on the individual facts and circumstance of the case which justify the leave.	Authorised Absence
E	Excluded but no alternative provision made -Used in the event of an external suspension	Authorised Absence
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Authorised Absence
M	Medical or dental appointment	Authorised Absence
R	Religious observance	Authorised Absence
S	Study Leave	Authorised Absence
T	Traveller Absence	Authorised Absence
G	Holiday not granted by the school or in excess of the period determined by the school	Unauthorised Absence
N	Reason for absence not yet provided	Unauthorised Absence
O	Absent without authorised	Unauthorised Absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Unauthorised Absence

Grantham Additional Needs Fellowship

Attendance Policy

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D	Dual registered at another school	Present
B	Off-site educational activity	Present
J	At an interview with prospective employers or another educational establishment	Present
P	Participating in a supervised sporting activity	Present
V	Educational visit or trip	Present
W	Work experience	Present
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	Authorised Absence
X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to be in school	N/A
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	N/A
#	Planned whole or partial school closure	N/A



Appendix 3: Emotional Based School Avoidance Pathway

Initial Steps: early intervention and effective whole school systems

The initial steps within the EBSA pathway support schools to take a preventative measure towards EBSA, with a focus on early intervention and prevention. It is important to identify the early warning signs of EBSA. If unaddressed, the EBSA behaviours can become entrenched making it more difficult to intervene once the child or young person has been out of education for some time.

If a parent or carer has any concerns about early warning signs of possible EBSA then a discussion should take place with the child or young person's school. This will allow school to explore these worries at the earliest opportunity to ensure the right support is offered that prevents these worries growing. These conversations may involve school completing an early help assessment to gain an understanding of the whole picture.

Individual healthcare plans can help to ensure that schools effectively support pupils with medical conditions, in terms of both physical and mental health. They provide clarity about what needs to be done, when and by whom.

Assess:

For those children and young people that need further support the steps within this Pathway continue the thorough assessment that leads into a robust plan as part of the assess, plan, do and review cycle, with the child or young person at the centre.

For any intervention or support plan to be successful, it is essential to gain an understanding of the various aspects at the core of the child or young person's emotional distress and/or social isolation that may be causing and maintaining the EBSA behaviours. It is vital that children and young people's behaviours are understood in the full complexity of their lives as unique human beings.

Plan:

Once all the assessment information has been gathered and considered fully, school will draw it together into an EBSA support plan. This is a structured and adaptable plan that involves the child or young person, the family, school and any involved professionals to develop and implement personalised interventions. The plan will address the identified needs of the child or young person both at home and school, ensuring that the strategies effectively target the unique challenges.

Do:

Once the initial EBSA support plan is drawn up it will be put into action. This will require ongoing working from everyone involved with the child or young person at the centre to ensure they have ownership of the plan. There may be bumps when carrying out the agreed plan and when this happens there should be a commitment from everyone to find solutions.

Review:

Once the EBSA support plan is put into action it needs to be continually monitored and adjusted, as needed, through regular planned reviews, consistent communication, realistic goal setting and ongoing collaboration between the child or young person, their family, school and any involved professionals. Within the ongoing assess, plan, do and review cycle it will be important to revisit the assessment and planning steps to further develop the Plan as situations develop and change. It is crucial to keep revisiting these at each review to ensure all the planning is focussed on the appropriate and current information.