# **Emotionally Based School Avoidance Project in Milton Keynes**

In Milton Keynes we are seeing an increase in children and young people experiencing difficulty in attending school due to emotional reasons, like anxiety.

Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA) is a broad umbrella term used to describe this. EBSA can present differently across individuals, but can often involve fear and anxiety, misery, complaints of feeling ill without an obvious cause, and/or reluctance to leave home.

The MK EBSA project was established in response to this increase with the aim of developing a joined-up pathway of support for children and young people experiencing EBSA. This includes the development of guidance and training for schools and parents.

A multi-professional working group has been established, including representatives from schools, the SEND Information, Advice and Support Service, the Parents and Carers Alliance MK, Children and Families Practices, and the SEND Team. The project is made up of three key strands:



The working group aims to deliver the following outcomes over the next academic year:

1. **Local picture and data:** Gain a better understanding of the local picture of EBSA, including prevalence and demographics.
2. **Guidance, support and resources:** Develop up to date guidance, resources and support based upon local need.
3. **MK Support Pathway:** Agree a cross-service pathway of support for children and young people experiencing EBSA to enable a consistent offer of support locally. Ensure that parents, schools and professionals know what support is available and how to access it.

**Current focus:**

* Embedding the EBSA Guidance for schools across MK in two parts: Information and Practice Documents, including delivering workshop training sessions to schools.
* Developing guidance and support documents for parents
* Training for parents about EBSA at the SEND Parent Information Day
* Continuing to co-produce a joined up local EBSA pathway for signposting and support.