

# Understanding EBSNA

## (Emotionally Based School Non-Attendance)

*A Supportive Guide for Families*

### What is EBSNA?

EBSNA occurs when a child struggles to attend school due to emotional distress, like anxiety or stress. Unlike truancy, these children want to attend, but overwhelming feelings make it feel impossible.

### Key Features

- ✓ Emotional distress linked to school
- ✓ Not truancy – driven by anxiety
- ✓ Avoidance as a coping strategy
- ✓ Often develops gradually with complex causes

### Common Signs & Causes

- Emotional distress: anxiety, panic, sadness
- Physical symptoms: headaches, stomach aches
- Avoidance behaviours: refusal to get ready or leave home
- Causes include child-specific factors (e.g., anxiety, autism), school environment, and family dynamics

### How Families Can Help

- Stay calm and supportive
- Seek advice from GP or Educational Psychologist
- Work with school on a gradual reintegration plan
- Celebrate small steps and progress
- Focus on resilience and coping strategies

### What We Do at Meadow Pathways

We create safe, nurturing environments, develop personalised support plans, and work with families to help children build confidence and thrive.

