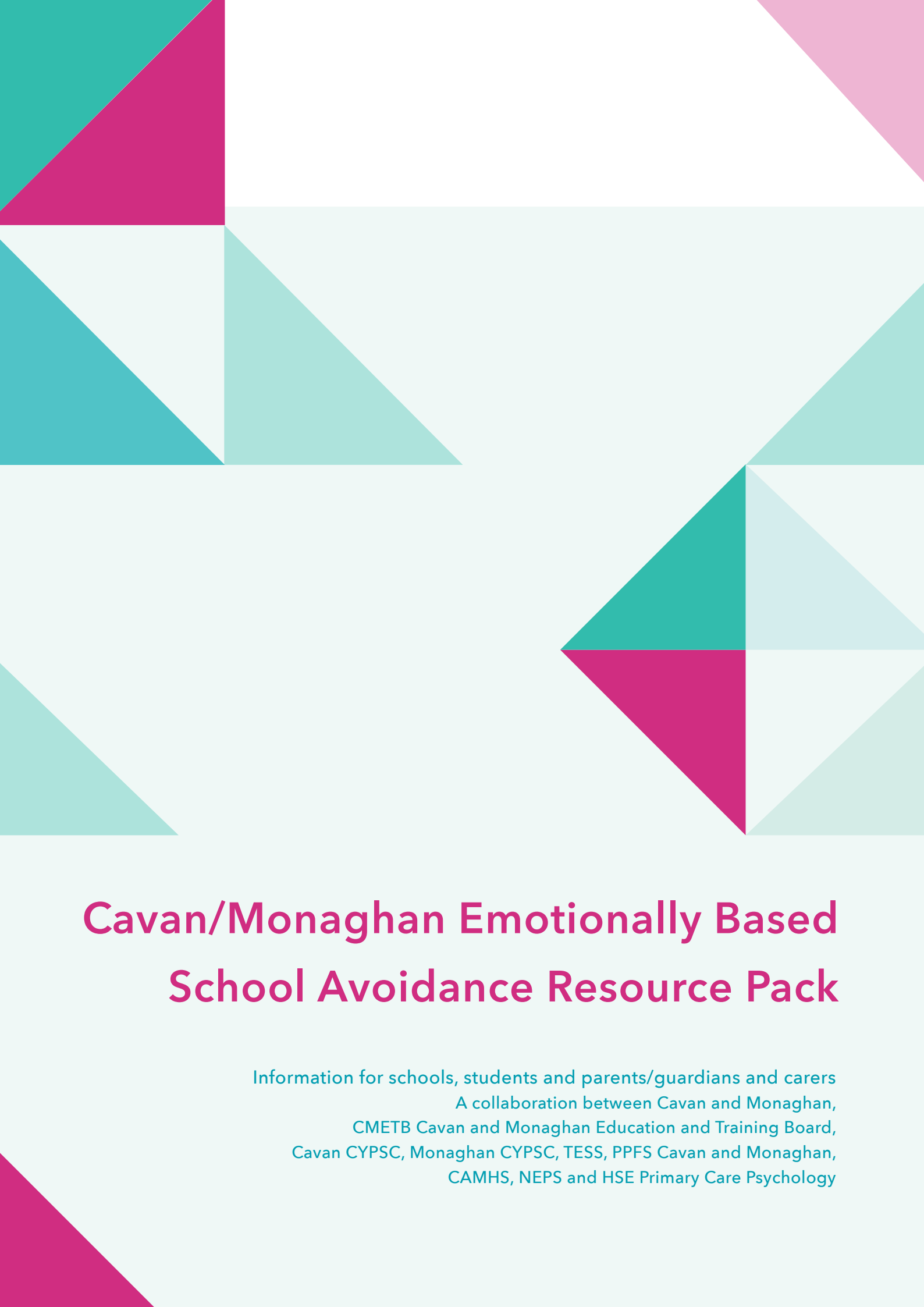




# Cavan/Monaghan Emotionally Based School Avoidance Resource Pack

Information for schools, students and parents/guardians and carers  
A collaboration between Cavan and Monaghan,  
CMETB Cavan and Monaghan Education and Training Board,  
Cavan CYPSC, Monaghan CYPSC, TESS, PPFS Cavan and Monaghan,  
CAMHS, NEPS and HSE Primary Care Psychology





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# Acknowledgements

School avoidance is a challenge that confronts some students and parents/guardians/carers and all schools sooner or later. Early recognition and intervention are key to prompt resolution. Where the problem persists or becomes complex, schools often seek the advice and support of outside agencies. However, navigating the system (for example knowing who to contact and when) can pose its own set of challenges.

To this end following a need highlighted through the Cavan and Monaghan CYPSC committees, a number of agencies in Cavan and Monaghan have joined to produce this Resource Pack for schools, students and parents/guardians/carers. We acknowledge with gratitude the contribution of all agencies.

We also acknowledge with gratitude the authors of the Meath 'Emotionally Based School Avoidance Pack' who allowed us to borrow heavily from their document and to the authors of 'School Refusal, Good Practice Guide for Schools' from whose document the Roscommon authors borrowed heavily.

The suggestions and strategies outlined in this pack are not exhaustive. However, it is hoped that the pack will provide some guidance and support to students, parents/guardians/carers and teachers.

# Glossary of Terms

**CAMHS** – Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services

**CDNTs** – Children’s Disability Network Teams

**CMETB** – Cavan and Monaghan Education and Training Board

**CYPSC** – Children and Young People’s Services Committee

**CFSN** – Child and Family Support Network

**EWO** – Education Welfare Officer

**EWS** – Education Welfare Service

**HSCL** – Home School Community Liaison

**HSE** – Health Service Executive

**ISPC** – Childline Therapeutic Support Service

**ISS** – Inclusion Support Service

**NCSE** – National Council for Special Education

**NEPS** – National Educational Psychological Service

**PC Psychology** – Primary Care Psychology

**SCP** – School Completion Programme

**SENO** – Special Education Needs Organiser

**SNA** – Special Needs Assistant

**TESS** – Tusla Education Support Service

**TUSLA** – Child And Family Agency

# Foreword

**This Resource Pack is based on current knowledge in this area. It is intended as a guide only. Not all the suggestions here will apply to any one student or situation.**

## CAVAN/MONAGHAN SCHOOL AVOIDANCE PATHWAY

The resource pack was designed to provide schools, students and parents/guardians/carers with a School Avoidance Pathway. The pathway was developed by services working with young people who are experiencing difficulties attending school for various reasons. It is hoped that this pathway and resource pack will provide a guide for schools and parents/guardians/carers on the best way to manage school avoidance and the relevant services that may be of assistance.

School avoidance often causes high levels of distress for families and can be very difficult for schools to manage. Early intervention, clear planning and good communication between schools, families and professionals is key. When a difficulty attending school becomes entrenched it is often much harder to work with than if it is identified early and intervention plans are put in place.

The pathway recognises the importance of early intervention and the key role that school has in identifying and intervening in this issue. The pathway guides families and schools on how to progress with early intervention and what to do if this intervention isn't working and professional support is required.

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Data Protection – Regulation EU 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the council of 26th April 2016, which has come into force in Ireland on the 25th May 2018, replacing the existing data protection framework under the EU Data Protection Directive where data pertaining to an individual is protected.

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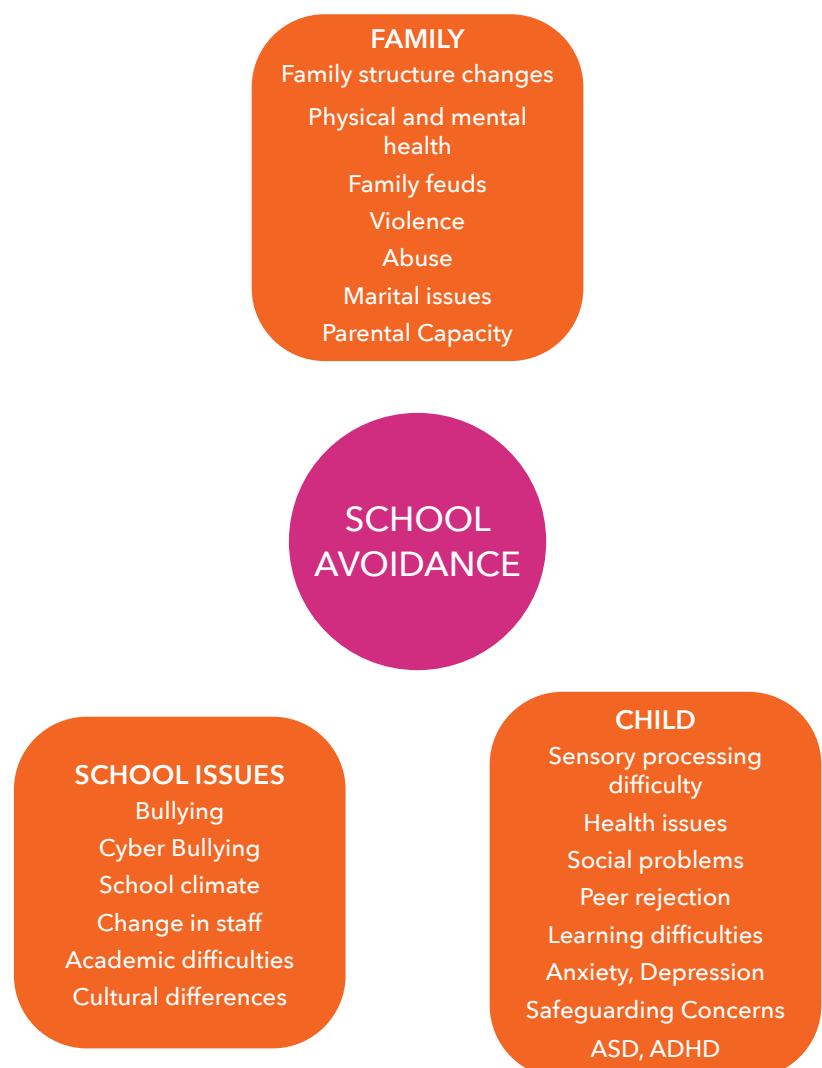
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# 1. What is school avoidance?

School avoidance is a systemic difficulty, and refers to student, parents/guardians/carers and school challenges where the student finds it difficult to attend or stay in school. Parents/guardians/carers and schools find it difficult to support the young person, which often results in the request for involvement of other services.

School avoidance may happen at any age but most typically occurs in children 5-7 years and/or 11-14 years of age. Generally, the student refuses to attend school and experiences significant

distress. School avoidance differs from truancy in that the young person is at home with the knowledge of the family despite their efforts to enforce attendance. The behaviour is differentiated from parents/guardians/carers who deliberately withdraw their child from school and from youths experiencing difficult circumstances such as homelessness that prevent adequate school attendance. There are many reasons why a student may refuse to attend school or remain in school.



## 2. What causes school avoidance?

### Factors may include:

- Student Temperament
- Death in the Family
- Environmental Factors
- Parent/guardian and carer Mental or Physical Health
- Coping Skills
- Parents Separating
- Moving House
- Anxiety
- Jealousy of new sibling
- Academic pressures, fears or dislike of subject
- Peer Problems
- Poor relationships with teachers
- Long term illness
- School Climate
- Sexual Identity
- Cultural Differences

**B**ULLYING can also be a cause of school avoidance. Bullying is unwanted aggressive behaviour among school-aged children involving a real or perceived power imbalance that is repeated or has the potential to be repeated over time. Bullying can include threats, intimidation, and/or attacking someone physically or verbally.

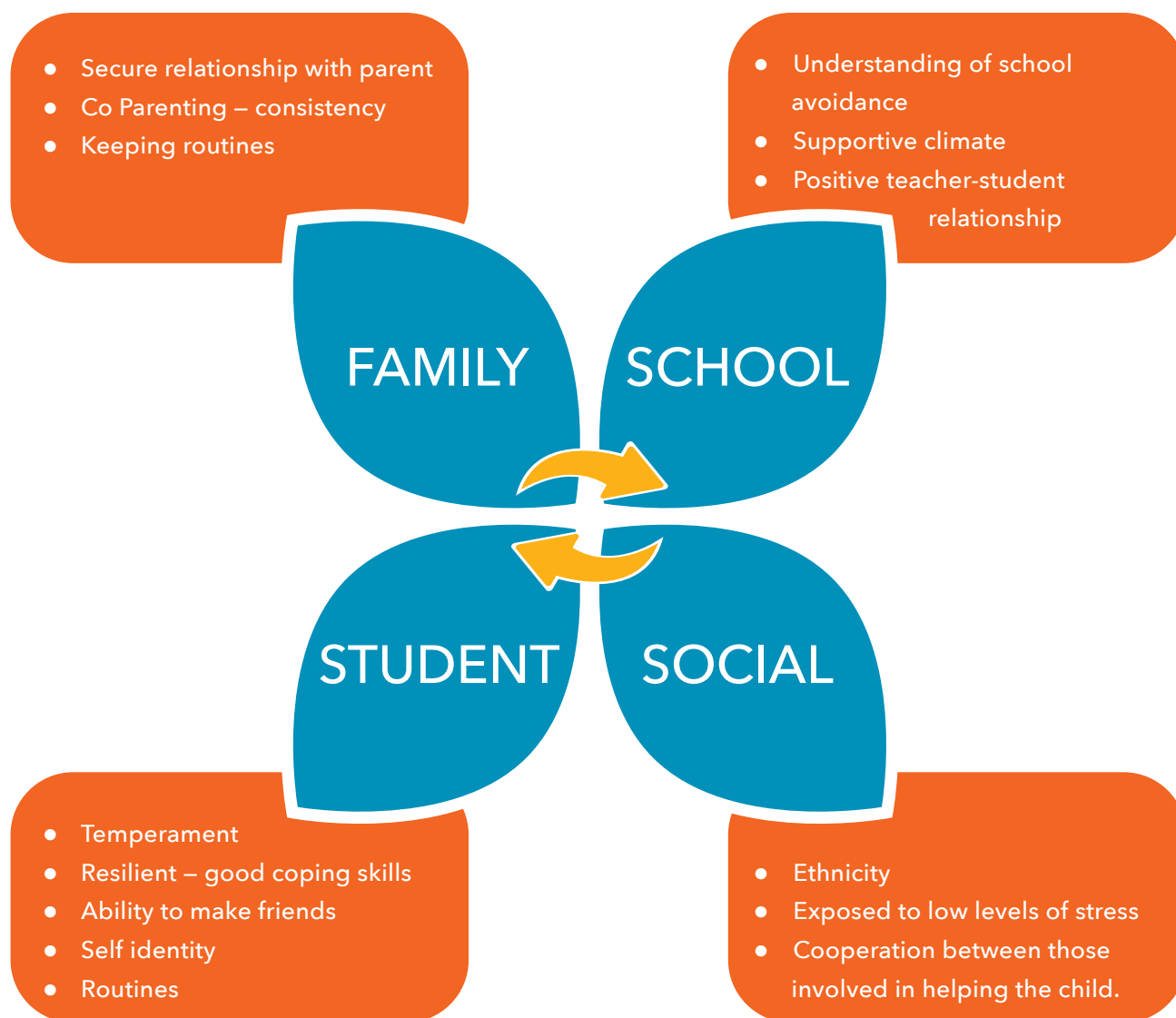
### Signs that a young person may be a victim of bullying:

- Mood Changes
- Unexplained injuries
- Lost or damaged clothes, books, electronic items
- Decline in academic performance
- Complaining of headaches, stomach pain, feeling sick
- Skipping meals, binge eating, not eating lunch at school
- Nightmares and trouble sleeping
- Sudden loss of friends or avoidance of social situations
- Decline in self-esteem or feeling helpless
- New onset of self-destructive behaviors: running away, engaging in deliberate self-harm, suicide threats.

---

Bullying can also occur on computers, mobile phones and tablets and is known as Cyber Bullying.

## 2.1 WHAT ARE THE FACTORS THAT REDUCE SCHOOL AVOIDANCE.



## 2.2 HOW DOES SCHOOL AVOIDANCE COME ABOUT?

The following diagrams illustrate the cycles of thoughts and feelings that can lead to a student

initially avoiding to attend school and continuing to refuse to attend.

### When school avoidance starts

#### BEHAVIOURS

- Avoidance to get ready for school.
- Avoidance to attend school, leave the house, etc...
- Avoidance of school related situations and people.
- Crying, hiding, tantrums, etc.



#### THOUGHTS

- Mammy is sick and might go to the hospital if I'm not here.
- I'm safe at home.
- I don't have to worry about not being able to do the work.
- No one can laugh at me when I'm at home.



#### FEELINGS

- Anxiety, fear, embarrassment, inferiority, depression, uncertainty, insecurity, isolation.



or

#### BEHAVIOURS

- Avoidance to get ready for school.
- Avoidance to attend school, leave the house, etc...
- Avoidance of school related situations and people.
- Crying, hiding, tantrums, etc.



#### THOUGHTS

- Everyone will be asking me questions about why I haven't been to school.
- I won't know the work because I haven't been attending.
- My friends won't want to mix with me anymore.



#### FEELINGS

- Anxiety, fear, embarrassment, inferiority, depression, uncertainty, insecurity, isolation.



### 3. Parents/guardians and carers

#### Be on the look out for:

- Frequent tearfulness/ distress/ pains in tummy/ bedwetting/ headaches/ signs of distress on Sunday nights or Monday mornings.
- Distress or saying they feel sick after a school break.
- Frequently asking the teacher to ring their parent/ wanting to go home/ saying that they are feeling sick.
- Challenging behaviour/ having tantrums about going to school, or before school in the morning.
- Prolonged difficulties (anxieties) for a young person when mixing with others (e.g. going outside to play; going to after school activities, parties, etc.).
- Pre-occupation with being organised for school
- A family stressor (e.g. parental separation or bereavement) can trigger some anxious behaviours/ feelings about leaving home, or leaving a parent in order to attend school. (Providing the young person with a calm listening ear, and letting them know that you understand, but that they still need to attend school, can help them get through a difficult period).

#### Adolescents may also show the following behaviour:

- Worry or fear related to school
- Sleeping difficulties and fatigue
- Change of mood, negativity towards school, subjects or teachers
- Increased self – consciousness
- Lack of engagement with school activities, outings, trips
- Poor sense of school belonging

### 3.1 WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP WITH EARLY SIGNS OF SCHOOL AVOIDANCE?

- Speak calmly with the young person. Let them know you understand.
- Encourage them to talk to you about how they feel.
- Be reassuring and encourage positive statements e.g. 'I can do this', 'school was good today'.
- Praise them for making the effort to go to school.
- Model coping behaviour as best you can.\*
- Be consistent and present a united front.
- Establish and maintain good evening and morning routines.
- Encourage relationships outside of school.
- Monitor their use of online screen time.
- Help with organisation of homework, school bag and uniform.
- Listen but do not reinforce their fear/anxiety.

*Use the checklist on the following page to help you.*

#### If your child is still avoiding going to school what else can you do?

- Keep a record of days your child avoids to go to school
- Help your child identify stressors
- Ask for homework to be sent home
- Consider other educational alternatives
- Stay calm and help your child build resilience by;

1. Encouraging your child to problem solve
2. Promote self esteem by encouraging your child to set achievable goals
3. Don't have all the answers
4. Let your child make their own mistakes. This will help them learn that failure is not the end of the world.

\* RESOURCE PACK ON COPING BEHAVIOUR;

<https://hbtg.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/KAN-Emotional-resilience-toolkit.pdf>

**AND REMEMBER  
YOU ARE NOT ALONE!**

#### Who can help you?

##### SCHOOL:

Contact your child's teacher or School Principal. They can begin to support the student and consult with their NEPS psychologist.

##### PROFESSIONAL SERVICES:

Go to your GP and explore whether there is a primary care child psychology service in your area and if so, seek an appointment.

# Checklist for parents/guardians and carers

| TASK                                                                                  | YES/NO | COMMENTS |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|----------|
| Reassure and encourage your child.                                                    |        |          |
| Problem solve ways to cope.                                                           |        |          |
| Help find and discuss some positive aspects of school that they enjoy.                |        |          |
| Have the adult who is better at promoting attendance take the child to school.        |        |          |
| Young person accompanied to school by friend/friends.                                 |        |          |
| Friend or identified teacher to meet your child.                                      |        |          |
| Deal constructively with family concerns and parenting issues.                        |        |          |
| T.V., laptops, gaming devices and the internet are not accessible when not in school. |        |          |
| Structure maintained outside of school.                                               |        |          |
| Use school timetable at home.                                                         |        |          |
| Ensure school books are at home.                                                      |        |          |
| Be mindful of your interactions with your child during 'school time' at home.         |        |          |
| Keep you child home only when they are sick.                                          |        |          |

### 3.2 WHEN TO SEND YOUR CHILD TO SCHOOL

Children will get sick from time to time but it's important to manage the number of days they

miss. The following are just guidelines. If you are unsure, please meet with your GP.

| SEND YOUR CHILD TO SCHOOL:                                                                                                                                        | KEEP YOUR CHILD AT HOME:                                                                                                                                         |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Parent/Guardian/Carer is Sick or Hospitalized</b><br>Plan ahead where you can. Ask a friend, relative or spouse to take your child to and from school.         | <b>Fever</b><br>Keep your child at home if they have a fever. If the fever does not go away after 2-3 days consult a GP.                                         |
| <b>Child avoids going to School</b><br>Talk to your child, they may be experiencing bullying, be behind in schoolwork, or not getting along with others.          | <b>Diarrhoea</b><br>If your child seems ill, has a fever or diarrhoea, keep them at home.                                                                        |
| <b>Chronic Disease or Illness</b><br>Speak with your school about your child's condition and develop a plan. School personnel can assist both you and your child. | <b>Vomiting</b><br>If your child has vomited twice or more in 24 hours, keep your child at home until the vomiting has stopped for 24 hours.                     |
| <b>Cold Symptoms</b><br>If your child does not have a fever and is able to participate in school activities send them to school.                                  | <b>Coughing</b><br>If your child has severe, rapid coughing or wheezing keep your child home and contact a GP.                                                   |
| <b>Head Lice</b><br>If your child has lice (intense itching), they can return to school after an initial treatment.                                               | <b>Head Lice</b><br>Intense itching, may feel like something is moving. Your child can return to school after treatment.                                         |
| <b>Strains, Sprains and Pains</b><br>If your child can walk, talk and eat he or she should be in school. If pain is severe or ongoing, consult a GP.              | <b>Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)</b><br>The white of the eye is pink with a thick discharge. Contact GP for medication/treatment before sending the child to school. |
| <b>Menstrual Issues</b><br>Most of the time menstrual issues should not be a problem. If they are severe consult a GP.                                            | <b>Rash With Fever</b><br>If a rash spreads quickly or is not healing keep your child at home and contact your GP.                                               |
|                                                                                                                                                                   | <b>Sore Throat</b><br>For a sore throat with fever, stomach ache, and/or red, swollen tonsils keep your child at home and contact a GP.                          |

# Resources for parents/guardians and carers:

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- *"Help! I've got an Alarm Bell going off in my head! How panic Anxiety and Stress affect your body"*, by K.L Aspden.  
Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- *"Overcoming your child's fears and Worries"* by Cathy Cresswell and Lucy Willetts, from the CBT overcoming series.  
Publishers Constable and Robinson.
- Does Your Child Need Help With Anxiety  
<https://rb.gy/dqyhb>
- For suggestions on Apps on mindfulness and relaxation:  
<http://parentingchaos.com/anxiety-apps-kids/>
- Special Educational Needs:  
<https://rb.gy/q76dq>
- Promoting Emotional Resilience: A Resource Pack:  
<https://hbtg.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/KAN-Emotional-resilience-toolkit.pdf>
- Screen Time Advice for Parents  
<https://rb.gy/b16nm>
- ASD Supports  
<https://asiam.ie/>
- My Child My Vision  
[https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/My\\_Child\\_My\\_Vision\\_Second\\_Edition\\_2019.pdf](https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/My_Child_My_Vision_Second_Edition_2019.pdf)
- 'Love In Love Out' by Malie Coyne  
*A Compassionate Approach To Parenting Your Anxious Child*
- Belong To LGBTQ + Youth Ireland  
<https://www.belongto.org>
- Bodywhys  
<https://www.bodywhys.ie>

## 4. The Child/Young Person

Everyone has a responsibility to help. This includes your child too. Help them draw up a plan and you can do it together.

Here are some ideas that might help:



DRAW UP CHECKLISTS.

### Did you know?

Morning routines and attendance patterns are set in September. So set yourself up for success by getting off to a smooth start in September.

Here's a 'Nighttime Checklist' that you might find useful.

### NIGHTTIME CHECKLIST

- ☐ Choose and lay out clothing and shoes.
- ☐ Put any items that you need for school in your school bag (e.g. permission slips, books, journal, homework)
- ☐ Make your lunch.
- ☐ Set your alarm!



CHECK OUT THESE LINKS ON WWW.YOUTUBE.IE

**Are You Anxious to Go to School? Advice from a Therapist.**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K3nCwYcwuHM>

**Dealing with School Phobia & Anxiety. Hear a Young Person's Experience.**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fqs1BuNyVY4>

And a 'Morning Checklist' that you might find useful.

### MORNING CHECKLIST

- ☐ Get out of bed when your alarm goes off.
- ☐ Have a good breakfast.
- ☐ Leave yourself plenty of time to get to school.
- ☐ Walk or cycle to school if you can.



# Resources for a Young Person

## MAKE YOUR OWN TRACKER

(you can choose what you want to track, here are some examples).

### School + Attendance = Good School Results

Set your own targets.

Week 1: I made it to school every day this week.

|        |        |        |        |        |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| 1      | 2      | 3      | 4      | 5      |
| _____  | _____  | _____  | _____  | _____  |
| Date   | Date   | Date   | Date   | Date   |
| _____  | _____  | _____  | _____  | _____  |
| Reason | Reason | Reason | Reason | Reason |

Week 2: I made it to school on time for the whole week.

|        |        |        |        |        |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| 7      | 8      | 9      | 10     | 11     |
| _____  | _____  | _____  | _____  | _____  |
| Date   | Date   | Date   | Date   | Date   |
| _____  | _____  | _____  | _____  | _____  |
| Reason | Reason | Reason | Reason | Reason |

Week 3: Attended full days for the whole week.

|        |        |        |        |        |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| 13     | 14     | 15     | 16     | 17     |
| _____  | _____  | _____  | _____  | _____  |
| Date   | Date   | Date   | Date   | Date   |
| _____  | _____  | _____  | _____  | _____  |
| Reason | Reason | Reason | Reason | Reason |

DON'T  
FORGET  
TO ASK  
FOR HELP.

# FAQ'S For Young Person

ref: <http://www.childrensrights.ie>

## Do I have a right to education?

Yes, the Government must make sure you receive a certain standard of education.

## Do I have to go to school?

Yes, from the age of 6 to 16 years, or once you have finished three years of secondary school.

## Do I have a right to be taught at home?

Yes, but your parent/guardian/carer must register you with the Tusla Alternative Education Assessment and Registration Service (AEARS) to ensure your education meets the required standard.

## Do I have to go to school every day?

Yes. Your parent/guardian/carer must make sure that you go to school every day.

## What happens if I am sick or have other reasons for not going to school?

Your parent/guardian/carer should contact the school to explain why. If you miss 20 or more days in a school year the school must tell the EWS. If there is no clear reason for your absence, the EWO may visit your home to help you improve your school attendance.

## Do I have to do homework?

Each school sets its own rules and policies for homework.

## Do I have to do tests and exams?

The law does not say that you must sit the Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate. However, both are state recognised and the most common way to further education.

## What happens if I get into trouble at school?

By law, every school must have a code of behaviour for students. The code of behaviour explains what will happen if you do not obey the school's rules. The school must act fairly and give you a chance to have your say. Breaking school rules can result in: detentions, temporary exclusion from class, suspension.

## What happens if I am suspended?

Suspension means you are not allowed to attend school for a set number of days. The school's

decision to suspend must reflect the seriousness of what you have done.

## What happens if I am expelled?

Expulsion means you cannot attend this school again. The Board of Management must inform EWS and wait 20 school days. The EWO will make sure you still get an education.

<https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/TESS-Expulsion-from-school-info.pdf>

## Can I appeal my suspension or expulsion?

Your parent/guardian/carer can appeal on your behalf to the Department of Education and Skills. An appeals committee will write to your parents/guardian/carer and to the school with the recommendations.

## What should the school do if I am being bullied?

Tell your teacher, principal or trusted adult. Schools must have a policy for dealing with bullying that include; procedures for investigating and dealing with bullying; for helping those affected by bullying; strategies to prevent bullying happening.

## Do I have a right to privacy in school?

Privacy in school means attending school without any interference by the school in your private life, your personal space, your body or your belongings. Schools can, however, search your bag if it's believed you are carrying illegal substances or alcohol with consent from both you and your parent/guardian or carer. Your locker is school property but you are entitled to privacy while the locker is assigned to you. A teacher may search your locker if they have a good reason. They must tell you the reason for the search.

## Do my parents have a right to know how I am doing in school?

Yes, they have a right to be kept informed about your education and behaviour in school.

## Do I have a right to see my school records?

When you are 18 the school has to make school records available if you ask for them. If you are under 18, your parent/guardian/carer can access school records on your behalf.

## 5. Information for Schools

SCHOOL IS CENTRAL IN PREVENTION, EARLY IDENTIFICATION, AND CONTINUING MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOL AVOIDANCE.

### 5.1 SIGNS THAT MAY BE OBSERVED IN SCHOOL:

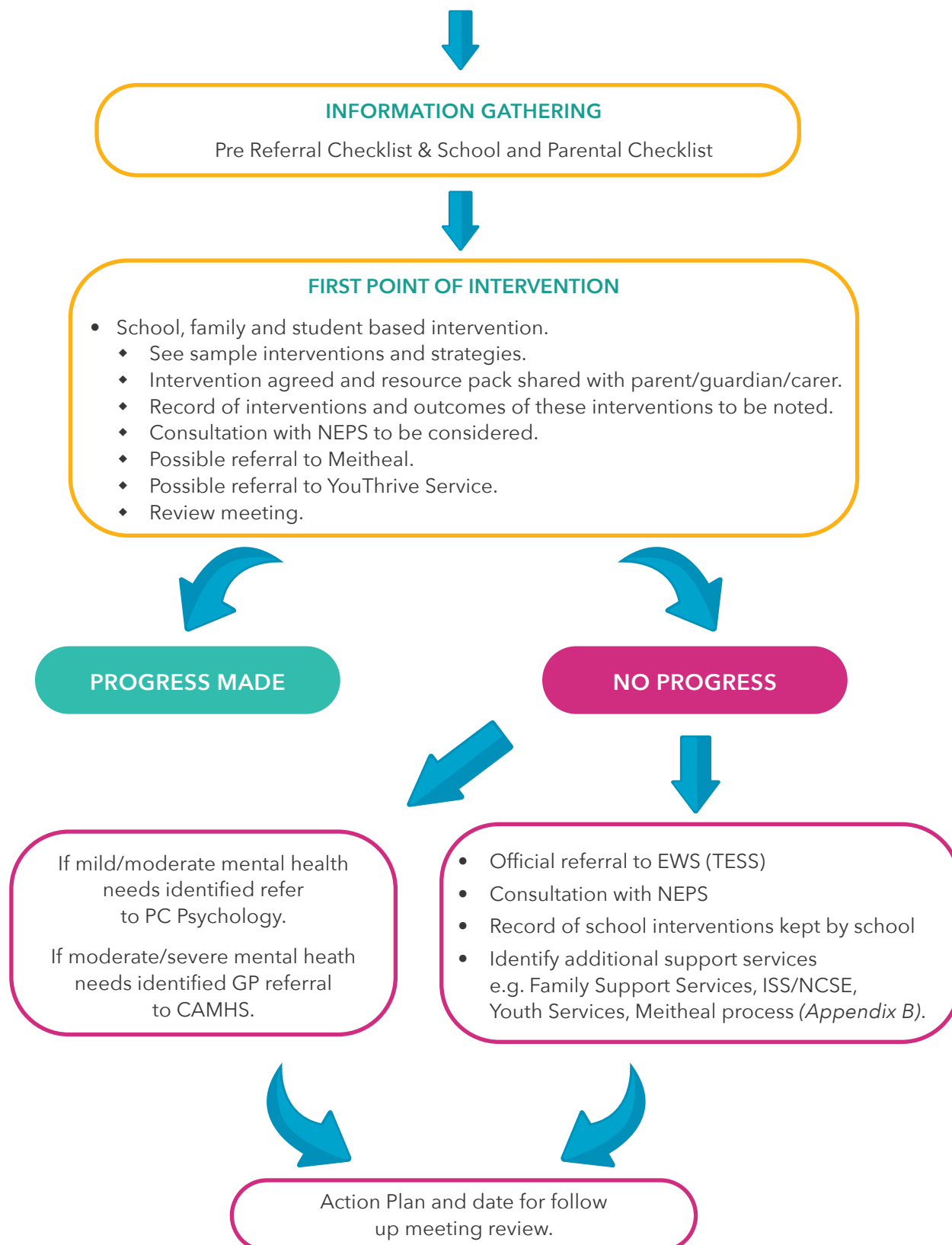
Most young people are occasionally reluctant to go to school or have some anxiety about certain activities. School avoidance, however, is a more persistent problem that might be characterised by some of the following;

- frequent complaints of illness before or during school, such as stomach aches, headaches, dizziness or fatigue (These problems often quickly fade if the young person is allowed to stay home)
- difficulty attending school after weekends or holidays
- long, unexplained absences from school
- periodic absences or missed classes for which no explanation is given
- frequent lateness to school or an adolescent who misses the bus every day
- difficulty attending full days
- struggling with breaks and lunch times
- avoidance to separate from parent/guardian/carer
- evidence of underachieving

It is vital that parents/guardians or carers and schools work together to understand the young person's reason for school avoidance. Open and continuous communication is key to ensure appropriate supports are in place to enable the young person/child to return to full attendance. A school avoidance pathway has been developed to provide a guide for schools and parents/guardians and carers on the best way to manage school avoidance.

## 5.2 SCHOOL AVOIDANCE PATHWAY

### SCHOOL AVOIDANCE IDENTIFIED AS A CONCERN BY PARENTS/GUARDIANS/CARERS OR SCHOOL



# Information Gathering: School & Parental Checklist

A high number of yes responses indicate a greater risk.

| Name of Young person:                                                                                                                                |     |    |     |          |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|----|-----|----------|
| Date:                                                                                                                                                |     |    |     |          |
| ATTENDANCE                                                                                                                                           |     |    |     |          |
|                                                                                                                                                      | YES | NO | N/A | COMMENTS |
| Reluctance to leave the house in the mornings                                                                                                        |     |    |     |          |
| Late for school                                                                                                                                      |     |    |     |          |
| Absent for part or whole days                                                                                                                        |     |    |     |          |
| ENVIRONMENTAL                                                                                                                                        |     |    |     |          |
|                                                                                                                                                      | YES | NO | N/A | COMMENTS |
| Significant life events (e.g.: moving house/school, separation of parents/family members, additions to the family, death of a pet)<br>Please specify |     |    |     |          |
| Young person living in more than one home/temporary accommodation                                                                                    |     |    |     |          |
| Parental involvement with education (e.g. homework, parent teacher meetings, good communication with school)                                         |     |    |     |          |
| Practical/financial challenges in getting to school                                                                                                  |     |    |     |          |
| LEARNING NEEDS                                                                                                                                       |     |    |     |          |
|                                                                                                                                                      | YES | NO | N/A | COMMENTS |
| Inability to problem solve                                                                                                                           |     |    |     |          |
| Organisational difficulties                                                                                                                          |     |    |     |          |

# Information Gathering: School & Parental Checklist

|                                                                  | YES | NO | N/A | COMMENTS |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|----|-----|----------|
| Homework not done/incomplete on a regular basis                  |     |    |     |          |
| Difficulties working under pressure/ processing difficulties     |     |    |     |          |
| Specific learning difficulty<br>Please specify                   |     |    |     |          |
| Not achieving learning potential                                 |     |    |     |          |
| Avoidance of particular school activities/subjects               |     |    |     |          |
| SOCIAL                                                           |     |    |     |          |
|                                                                  | YES | NO | N/A | COMMENTS |
| Bullying                                                         |     |    |     |          |
| Fallen out with friends/<br>difficulties with peer relationships |     |    |     |          |
| Social communication difficulties                                |     |    |     |          |
| Not independent for age                                          |     |    |     |          |
| Struggles during unstructured times                              |     |    |     |          |
| Lack of active engagement in social and leisure outlets          |     |    |     |          |
| EMOTIONAL WELL BEING                                             |     |    |     |          |
|                                                                  | YES | NO | N/A | COMMENTS |
| Often appears tired                                              |     |    |     |          |
| Often appears to be lacking in interest/ motivation              |     |    |     |          |
| Demonstrates low self esteem                                     |     |    |     |          |
| Shy, quiet or passive                                            |     |    |     |          |

# Information Gathering: School & Parental Checklist

| EMOTIONAL WELL BEING                                                                                           |                                                                                           |    |     |          |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|-----|----------|
|                                                                                                                | YES                                                                                       | NO | N/A | COMMENTS |
| Appears worried or anxious                                                                                     |                                                                                           |    |     |          |
| Displays behaviours that challenge                                                                             |                                                                                           |    |     |          |
| Lack of involvement in school life                                                                             |                                                                                           |    |     |          |
| PHYSICAL WELL BEING                                                                                            |                                                                                           |    |     |          |
|                                                                                                                | YES                                                                                       | NO | N/A | COMMENTS |
| Had a serious illness or has a medical condition                                                               |                                                                                           |    |     |          |
| Complained of sickness or headaches                                                                            |                                                                                           |    |     |          |
| Had rapid weight gain or loss                                                                                  |                                                                                           |    |     |          |
| Changes in eating habits                                                                                       |                                                                                           |    |     |          |
| Other                                                                                                          |                                                                                           |    |     |          |
| <b>Completed by:</b><br>(please include school, parent/guardian and carer, young person's name as appropriate) | <div>School Representative</div> <div>Parent/Guardian/Carer</div> <div>Young Person</div> |    |     |          |

## 6. School Based Programmes and Interventions

### WHAT CAN BE HELPFUL FOR ALL STUDENTS IN SCHOOL?

#### 6.1 PROMOTION OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

An active and positive relationship between parents/guardians/carers and school is essential to ensure a quick collaborative response when difficulties occur. Channels between parents/guardians/carers and the school should remain open in order to share information in terms of the student's social, emotional and educational development. This open communication system ensures that where concerns arise, they can be dealt with efficiently.

Parents/guardians and carers may sometimes feel it is hard to connect with their young person around school issues. Some ways in which parents/guardians and carers can get involved are listed below:

- Checking in around homework.
- Taking an interest in any projects which may have to be completed.
- Attending school events such as parent-teacher meetings, fundraising events or school performances.
- Keeping communication active with the young person's class teacher/year head in the form of a communication notebook or through 1:1 face to face meetings.
- Being invited in to help in the class with making resources, career days or assisting on school tours.
- Supporting attendance at after school activities.
- Communicating with Home School Liaison Officer and School Completion Staff (where available).

It is important that parents/guardians and carers receive consistent information and advice in terms of encouraging regular school attendance and initial steps to take should a decrease in attendance be noted.

#### 6.2 GENERAL TESTING

It can be difficult to keep track of a large number of students within the school. However, in order to ensure that young persons do not "fall through the net", it is suggested that regular testing in the areas of reading, writing, spelling, numeracy and behaviour (including social skills) are undertaken.

#### 6.3 FOR PRIMARY SCHOOLS

- Special Education Needs – A Continuum of Support
  - ♦ Guidelines for Teachers  
<https://assets.gov.ie/40642/674c98d5e72d48b7975f60895b4e8c9a.pdf>
  - ♦ Resource Pack for Teachers  
<https://assets.gov.ie/40645/20f442fa414940f894506ed717d7f635.pdf>
- Behavioural Emotional and Social Difficulties – A Continuum of Support  
<https://assets.gov.ie/40684/97bbea80d96b4057bf3f1f01107c7db4.pdf>

#### 6.4 FOR POST PRIMARY SCHOOLS

- A Continuum of Support for Post Primary Schools
  - ♦ Guidelines for Teachers  
<https://assets.gov.ie/40653/cc3a4af942a24fe0870cc8d79d92dbf2.pdf>
  - ♦ Resource Pack for Teachers  
<https://assets.gov.ie/40658/f896b4d014464ad1b9241e91c5405370.pdf>

*These resources are also available on:*  
[www.gov.ie/education](http://www.gov.ie/education)

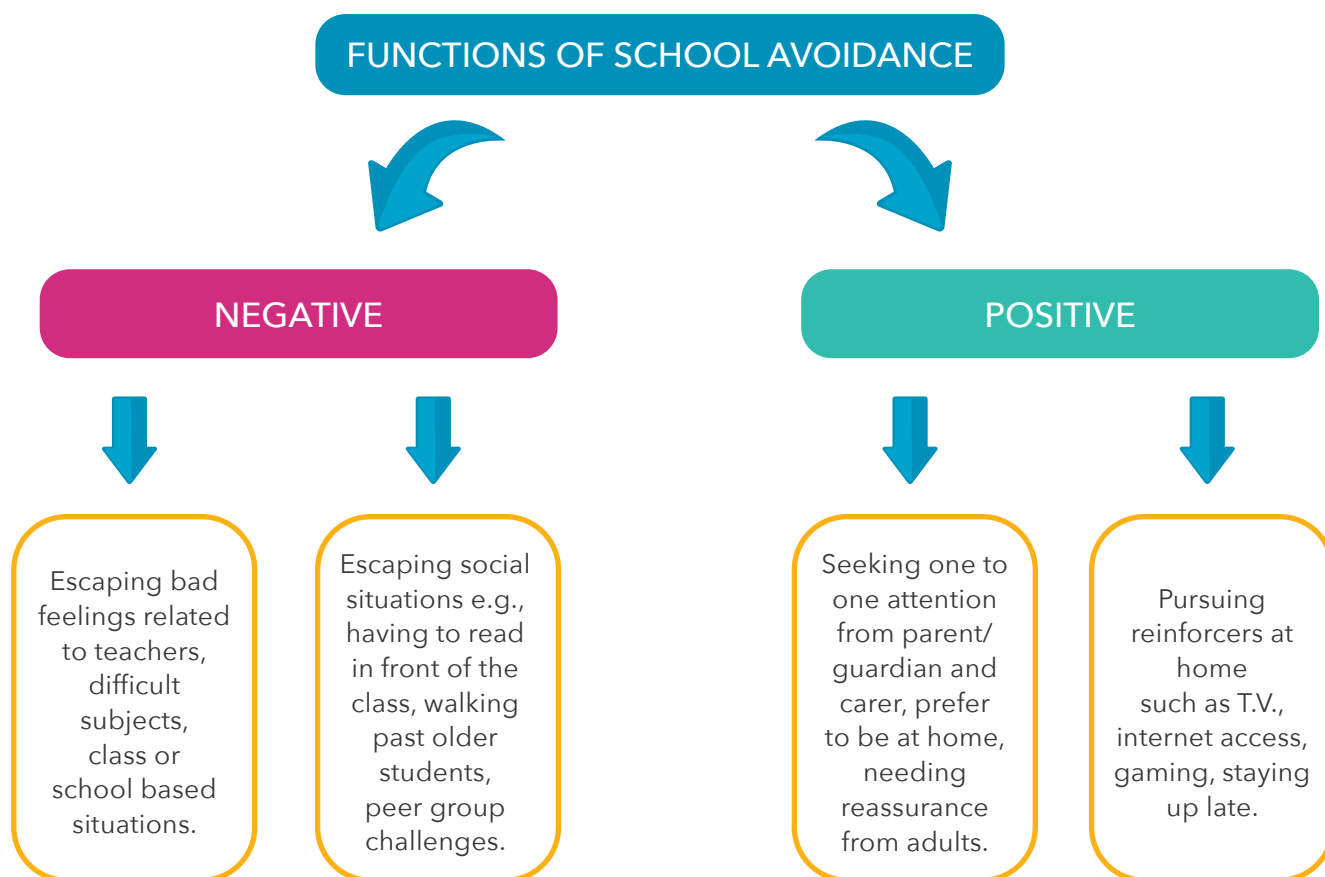
## 6.5 ATTENDANCE

Monitoring attendance is crucial in terms of identifying early warning signs for school avoidance. This is an area that all schools are

obliged to adhere to and it is important that this information is utilised effectively.

### Areas which may need checking include:

- Medical difficulties – are there underlying medical reasons for the student avoiding school?
- Social reasons – Gain a greater understanding of the student's social circle or lack of.
- Educational reasons – is the student having difficulty in particular subjects, or overall?
- Environmental reasons – is there something in the environment causing distress for the student?
- Functions of School Avoidance – are there other reasons the student is avoiding school?



Collecting information and assessing the above areas can lead to a more in-depth, focused intervention which is tailored to the

individual needs of the student. The Continuum of Support documents aim to assist schools in developing plans that support students.

## 6.6 SCHOOL BASED PROGRAMMES/ CURRICULUM

There are a number of available school programmes and interventions which can assist in either the creation or implementation of a plan for early or established school avoidance. These include:

- Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE)
- Stay Safe
- Social Skills Programmes, e.g. FRIENDS programme
- The School's Code of Behaviour (including incentive programmes to encourage positive behaviour such as regular attendance)
- Health and Safety Policy
- School based resilience training programmes
- Teaching Mindfulness to all students
- School Completion Programme supports and interventions where available

See *Resources for parents/guardians and carers* for more information.

## 6.7 WHEN NEEDS ARE IDENTIFIED POST SCREENING

As soon as a young person is identified, a plan should be implemented in a timely manner to ensure that difficulties do not escalate. School and Parental checklist are useful resources to help in this process.

Schools are encouraged to gather relevant background information, plan and evaluate as well as gather information on specific relevant interventions and resources available to them.

## 6.8 INVOLVEMENT OF OUTSIDE AGENCIES AND SUPPORT SERVICES

Sometimes, additional resources may be needed if a student has difficulties which involve the whole family. It is beneficial for schools to identify these needs and obtain further professional support when appropriate. Where there are difficulties with attendance, advice should be sought from the EWO and a referral to the EWS should be made. NEPS should also be consulted in this regard. A young person may be referred to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), Primary Care Psychology, Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, and/or other agencies depending on specific presentation (see *Appendix A*).

Where there is uncertainty as to which service is most appropriate and where there are unmet needs for the young person a request can be made directly to the Meitheal Process. A referral can also be made to Child Protection Social Work (TUSLA) if it is deemed that the young person's needs are not being met by the parents/guardians/carers.

See *Appendix A* for support services and contact details.



NEPS SCHOOL AVOIDANCE RESOURCE

<https://tinyurl.com/4j2b7c7w>



## 7. What can schools do when someone is identified as school avoiding?



### 7.1 INDIVIDUAL INTERVENTIONS

When a student is identified as having difficulty in attending school it is imperative to implement interventions as soon as possible. The longer a student is out of school, the harder it is to return to the routine of school.

The following process is advised:

1. Alert the parents/guardians/carers to the fact that there are concerns about school attendance.
2. Organise a meeting between school, parents/guardians/carers and young person to identify and discuss the issues. Guidance Counsellors, Chaplains, Learning Support, HSCL, or SCP staff are often best placed to be a key support for the family. School avoidance is not always due to anxiety and a full understanding of the family and young person's context should be sought by school.
3. Identify the cause of the school avoidance with the student and family (see *School and Parental checklist*). Once the reason for the school avoidance is understood it will be easier to build supportive interventions around this.
4. Learning or social needs may be identified and the school and family should seek to address these barriers with interventions, e.g. Resource, NEPS, SCP, buddy within school and so on.
5. A plan for re-entry to school should be agreed with the young person, their parents/guardians/carers and the school team. Full school attendance may be appropriate for younger students or those in the early stage of school avoidance. A gradual return plan is often recommended for older students or students who are experiencing more severe anxiety or depression (see *Sample Return to School Plan*). The main focus of this plan is a gradual working increase in hours that the young person spends in the school environment. This plan should be agreed and signed up to by all relevant parties. Schools should follow the guidance in relation to reduced school days which can be found online at:  
[www.gov.ie/en/publication/63545-the-use-of-reduced-school-days/](http://www.gov.ie/en/publication/63545-the-use-of-reduced-school-days/).  
  
Schools can contact:  
[reduceschoolday@tusla.ie](mailto:reduceschoolday@tusla.ie)  
should they have a query regarding reduced days.
6. If the student is not yet doing full days, time at home should be structured as if they were in school (e.g. uniform on, working on the subjects as per timetable, homework, reduced screen time).
7. An EWO and/or NEPS consult may be sought at this stage.

8. Teachers and school staff should be made aware of the plan and briefed on anxiety related issues if present e.g. talking aloud in class, pupils leaving the classroom unhindered. Staff should be advised not to quiz the student on absences or question why the student has not been in class.
9. The student should be helped to identify staff members they feel safest with who can support the student throughout the return process. Regular check-ins with that staff member can be useful for the young person to discuss their difficulties.
10. Any additional support strategies should be implemented as soon as the student begins the return to school, for example social skills programmes or extra tuition to catch up on missed work.
11. Identify a buddy or mentor to meet the student on their first day back. Returning to school activities can be daunting and a peer is best placed to help with this. This peer can help ensure the student is included in a group for lunches, is briefed on class work and remains close to them as a support over the return to school period. With the young person's consent it may also be helpful to brief peers on the return to school and urge them to be supportive with no questioning as to why the student has been absent, whilst avoiding over-dramatising the situation.
12. Where possible, a quiet space should be designated for the young person to use as a relaxation room; this will encourage the student to stay in the school rather than leave when their anxiety is high. A designated staff member may be useful to help calm the young person if time out is needed (SCP staff or members of the care team where SCP support is not available). Time out cards may be a useful strategy to trial with the student. This will allow them to leave the classroom without significant disruption. If they are in possession of these cards and are in the hallways during class time, they can show this card without being unduly questioned.
13. Regular phone contact between parents/guardians/carers and school is recommended in order to maintain the return to school plan.
14. A record of attendance and time spent in school should be kept by the school.
15. A review date for the return plan should be set ten school days from the initial plan being made and all steps implemented over this period. A record of intervention should be kept in case of referral onwards. A checklist of these steps is found in Section 4 and if an onwards referral to services is made, the checklist could be included.
16. Any successful work with an individual needs to be embedded in whole school systems. General good practice for promoting well being and positive mental health also applies to school avoidance. For a sample Whole School Audit for the promotion of emotional wellbeing;  
[www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/wellbeing-policy-statement-and-framework-for-practice 2018%E2%80%9923.pdf](http://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/wellbeing-policy-statement-and-framework-for-practice-2018%E2%80%9923.pdf)

## 7.2 SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

When a student has special educational needs, and school avoidance is an issue, the following is important to have in place to facilitate a smooth re-engagement:

- All teachers, SNAs and staff members have been briefed about anxiety related difficulties, social difficulties, learning difficulties or challenges at home.
- Where the student's learning needs have been identified, the student may need to be prioritised for interventions within school and/or a request for NEPS involvement.
- A suitably resourced student support plan is implemented.
- Review of school based anxiety management programmes where available, providing the student with the opportunity to learn about anxiety and how best to manage and cope.



REFERRALS TO THE EDUCATIONAL WELFARE SERVICE CAN BE SUBMITTED ONLINE VIA THE TUSLA PORTAL ACCESSIBLE AT :

<https://rb.gy/caent>



# Sample Return to School Plan

## PRIMARY SCHOOL

| NAME OF YOUNG PERSON:                                                                                                                                        | DATE |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| <b>TUESDAY</b>                                                                                                                                               |      |
| Arrive in school at 9.30 a.m., key person meets the student and together they work on an individual plan until break.                                        |      |
| Stay in with 2 peers at break, after break go to class with them.                                                                                            |      |
| At lunch, student goes with 2 peers into the playground or to a quiet place to play. After lunch, student goes to library with key person for the afternoon. |      |
| <b>WEDNESDAY</b>                                                                                                                                             |      |
| Arrive in school at 9.30, go to library with key person until break.                                                                                         |      |
| Student goes to playground at break with 2 peers and then on to class with them.                                                                             |      |
| Go out to play at lunch with peers and attend class after lunch if ready.                                                                                    |      |
| <b>THURSDAY</b>                                                                                                                                              |      |
| Arrive in school 9.30, go to library with SNA until break.                                                                                                   |      |
| Meet friends in the playground at break (if ready) and attend classes until lunch.                                                                           |      |
| Meet friends at lunch and attend afternoon classes.                                                                                                          |      |
| <b>FRIDAY</b>                                                                                                                                                |      |
| Arrive in school at 9.30 a.m. Attend library for 30 mins with SNA.                                                                                           |      |
| Attend playground and class as normal.                                                                                                                       |      |
| <b>MONDAY</b>                                                                                                                                                |      |
| Student arrives in school at normal start time. Goes to the library with SNA for half an hour and then on to class.                                          |      |
| Student attends playground and class as normal.                                                                                                              |      |

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Professional Role: \_\_\_\_\_

# Sample Return to School Plan

## POST-PRIMARY SCHOOL

| NAME OF YOUNG PERSON:                                                                                                               | DATE |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| <b>TUESDAY</b>                                                                                                                      |      |
| Arrive in school at 9.30 a.m. Meet key person and start work on an individual plan.                                                 |      |
| Student meets 2 peers at break time in a quiet space (e.g. library/computer room). Student returns to class with peers after break. |      |
| Student goes home at lunch time and continues school work at home.                                                                  |      |
| <b>WEDNESDAY</b>                                                                                                                    |      |
| Arrive in school at 9.30 a.m. Meet key person and work on plan until break.                                                         |      |
| Meet peers at break and go to class with peers after break.                                                                         |      |
| Student spends lunch with peers and stays with key person (if available) after lunch.                                               |      |
| <b>THURSDAY</b>                                                                                                                     |      |
| Arrive at 9.30 and go to library with class work until break.                                                                       |      |
| Meet peers at break and attend classes with them until lunch.                                                                       |      |
| Meet peers at lunch in a quiet place and attend classes after lunch as normal.                                                      |      |
| <b>FRIDAY</b>                                                                                                                       |      |
| Arrive in school at 9.30 a.m. Meet with key person for first class. Attend all other classes as normal.                             |      |
| Check in with key person at the end of the day.                                                                                     |      |
| <b>MONDAY</b>                                                                                                                       |      |
| Student arrives in school at normal start time and meets key person for first class.                                                |      |
| Student attends break times and classes as normal.                                                                                  |      |

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Professional Role: \_\_\_\_\_

## 8. What if this is not working or the plan has not progressed?

- A referral should be made to the EWS (tess) if the young person continues to miss school in the same academic year. A review meeting with parents/guardians/carers and school should take place to discuss progress. Discuss barriers that have impeded progress and possible solutions to these. Identify the areas of the plan that have worked and look at why these supports have proved helpful. Brainstorm other supports which may help.
- All supports currently in place should be reviewed and if additional supports are needed they should be identified and implemented as soon as possible. This may include NEPS and Tusla Family Support Services.
- Linking with local Youth/Community Agencies to provide out of school supports can be beneficial in supporting the young person. Youth Work organisations provide personal and social development programmes that compliment a young person's formal, academic or vocational education and training.
- It may be helpful to request that the case be considered for the Meitheal process with the written consent of the parents/guardians/carers. The Tusla Meitheal process identifies the strengths and needs of the young person and family while co-ordinating services in order to develop an agreed action plan and review process of same. The aim is for the identified unmet needs of the young person to be met by the parents/guardians/carers supported by the various agencies. There must be two or more agencies involved with the young person for Meitheal to be considered. Following this meeting regular reviews will take place with the young person, parents/guardians/carers and professionals to monitor and support the implementation of the Meitheal Action Plan (see *Appendix B* for a step by step guide).
- If no significant progress has been made, a referral can be made through GP or a senior clinician (see *CAMHS Operational Guidelines*):  
  
[www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/4/mental-health-services/camhs/publications/camhs-operational-guide-2019.pdf](http://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/4/mental-health-services/camhs/publications/camhs-operational-guide-2019.pdf)
  - ♦ to **PC Psychology** (if behavioural or mild-moderate mental health difficulties are present); or
  - ♦ to **CAMHS** (if moderate to severe mental health issues are present).
- A referral can be made to TUSLA Child protection Social Worker if it is deemed that the parents/guardians/carers are not supporting the young person to meet their identified unmet needs.

## 9. School Avoidance and ASD

Some children who experience school avoidance have autism spectrum disorder (ASD), where anxiety issues contribute to their difficulties at school in a way that can totally overwhelm them leading to a flight or fight response. The factors which influence the levels of anxiety in those with ASD are multiple and often complex, with each child experiencing a set of challenges unique to them. These challenges can be associated with difficulties such as context blindness, executive functioning, limited theory of mind, difficulties processing language, focus on detail, sensory processing and perfectionism.

Children with ASD need teachers and school staff who:

- Know their distinct thinking and learning style
- Are calm and reassuring, especially when the child is confused or experiencing sensory overload
- Manage the other students so that the child feels safe and can concentrate
- Know when the child needs a break or time alone (a card system and identified safe places to go can be very useful here).
- Prepare the child for transitions and changes in the daily schedule (visual timetables)
- Endeavour to understand the child's perspective, experiences and motivators
- Help the child cope with challenges, pacing and mistakes in a way that emphasises progress and success.

Once these areas have been addressed, schools could consider using resources such as:

- Middletown Centre for Autism designs and delivers training programmes cognisant of the needs of parents/guardians/carers, Education Professionals and those who traverse these groupings

[www.middletownautism.com](http://www.middletownautism.com)

These courses are delivered to teachers in conjunction with training offered by the National Council for Special Education

[www.ncse.ie](http://www.ncse.ie)

- *Starving the Anxiety Gremlin* by Kate Collins-Donnelly
  - AsIAM is an Irish based association whose website provides a range of resources for young people with ASD and their parents/guardians/carers and teachers.
- <https://asiam.ie/>
- ASD Good Practice Guidance for schools-Supporting Children in Schools





# APPENDICES

## Appendix A: Useful Contacts

| USEFUL CONTACTS NAME                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | ADDRESS                                                                                                                      | CONTACT                                                                                                                                             |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>TUSLA FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES</b><br><br>Family Support Services are for families with children and young people under 18 years of age who need support. Family life is not always easy. Life events like birth, death, depression, redundancy, separation, illness, abuse or financial problems all put stress and strain on family life and relationships. Family Support Services can help. Simply having someone to talk to about your problem can be the easiest way to begin to deal with your problem. There are many support groups for adults, teenagers, children and carers that give people the chance to tell their own stories and give support to each other. Family Support Services are generally provided to families in their own homes and communities. Drop in services, group work and a family support practitioner are some of the options available. | <b>CHILD AND FAMILY AGENCY</b><br>Hampton Court,<br>Cavan<br><br><b>WELLBEING CENTRE</b><br><b>CASTLEBLAYNEY</b><br>Monaghan | 049 4369800<br><br>042 9795623                                                                                                                      |
| <b>CHILD AND FAMILY SUPPORT NETWORK</b><br><br>Meitheal is Tusla – Child and Family Agency's National Early Intervention Model. It identifies the needs of children and families and focuses on strengths and outcomes. This way of working aims to ensure proper supports and services are made available to children and families when they are required. Child and Family Support Networks are made up of local services in a given CFSN area, who work with children and families. The CFSN supports members in their roll out of Meitheal and signposting parents.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <b>CAVAN</b><br>Hampton Court,<br>Cootehill Road,<br>Cavan<br><br><b>MONAGHAN</b><br>Wellbeing Centre,<br>Castleblayney      | <b>Antoinette Brady</b><br>049 4369800<br>antoinette.brady1@tusla.ie<br><br><b>Gretchen Swinburne</b><br>042 9795623<br>gretchen.swinburne@tusla.ie |



| USEFUL CONTACTS NAME                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | ADDRESS                                                                                                                                                                  | CONTACT                                  |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>ISPCC CHILDLINE THERAPEUTIC SUPPORT SERVICE - MONAGHAN COUNTY</b></p> <p>Our professional services are based on a resilience model and provide children, young people, and families with therapeutic support in response to difficulties or challenges the young person or family may have experienced or are experiencing. Each young person receives a personalized program informed by our assessment of the child's needs through the lens of our resilience model of 'self-esteem, social support, and self-regulation.' We also often support Parents and caregivers directly who may be experiencing difficulties in their parenting.</p> | ISPCC YWCA Building,<br>North Road,<br>Monaghan                                                                                                                          | Janice: 087 7121996<br>monaghan@ispcc.ie |
| <p><b>YOUTHRIVE</b></p> <p>YouThrive is a partnership between HSE and Foroige. It is an early intervention youth mental health service based in Cavan and Monaghan for ages 12-25 with mild and emerging mental health difficulties.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | <p><b>YOUTHRIVE YOUTH HUB</b><br/> <i>The Peace Campus<br/> Monaghan with outreach<br/> services across Cavan<br/> and Monaghan.</i></p>                                 | 042 9674915<br>youthrive@hse.ie          |
| <p><b>HSE PRIMARY CARE</b></p> <p>Assessment, Intervention (individual and group), Psychological Therapy, Advice and Consultation.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <p><b>CAVAN</b><br/> Drumalee Primary<br/> Care Building,<br/> Drumalee,<br/> Cavan</p> <p><b>MONAGHAN</b><br/> Saint Davnet's Hospital,<br/> Rooskey,<br/> Monaghan</p> | <p>049 4353145</p> <p>047 30400</p>      |

## Appendix A: Useful Contacts

| USEFUL CONTACTS NAME                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | ADDRESS                                                                                                            | CONTACT                                   |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| <b>CHILD AND ADOLESCENT MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES (CAMHS)</b><br><br>Health Service Executive (HSE) Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) provide mental health services to those up to the age of 18 years, who have moderate to severe mental disorders that require the input of a multi-disciplinary team. | <b>CAMHS CAVAN</b><br>Connolly Street Primary Care Centre,<br>Connolly Street,<br>Cavan, Co. Cavan                 | 049 4378920                               |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | <b>CAMHS MONAGHAN</b><br>Woodvale,<br>St. Davnet's Campus,<br>Rooskey,<br>Monaghan, Co. Monaghan                   | 047 95444                                 |
| <b>EDUCATION WELFARE SERVICES (TESS)</b><br><br>The Education Welfare Service works with children, young people and their families who are experiencing difficulty with school attendance; this is done through, home visits, educational welfare conferences and collaboratively working with different agencies.        | <b>EWS REGIONAL OFFICE - TESS</b><br>Region 5, C/O LMETB,<br>Chapel Street,<br>Dundalk,<br>Co. Louth               | 042 9419027<br>ewsregion5@tusla.ie        |
| <b>NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICE (NEPS)</b><br><br>NEPS psychologists work with both primary and post-primary schools and are concerned with the wellbeing, learning, behaviour, social and emotional development of all students.                                                                           | <b>NEPS HEAD OFFICE:</b><br><a href="http://www.gov.ie/education">www.gov.ie/education</a>                         | 01 8892700<br>Neps@neps.gov.ie            |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | <b>LOCAL OFFICE:</b><br>2nd Floor, Government Offices, Elm House,<br>Co. Cavan,<br>H12 A8H7, Cavan                 | 01 8650780<br>neps_cavan@education.gov.ie |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | <b>NEPS NORTHEAST REGIONAL OFFICE:</b><br>2nd Floor, Government Offices, Kilcarn, Navan,<br>Co. Meath,<br>C15 FEF2 | 01 8650635                                |

| USEFUL CONTACTS NAME                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | ADDRESS                                                                                                                                   | CONTACT                  |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>YOUTH SERVICES</b><br><br>YouthWork Ireland and ISPCC work together as Bounceback in Cavan. Provide voluntary and targeted youth activities and supports for young people in the 10-24 age range, including Youth Information, Outdoor Learning, After schools groups and Drop-ins, Drugs Education and Prevention, 1:1 support, LGBTI+ youth groups, Music groups, Sessional and Seasonal activities and in some projects one to one supports. | <b>YOUTH WORK IRELAND CAVAN:</b><br><br><b>WEST CAVAN-BOUNCE BACK YOUTH SERVICE</b><br>Belturbet Youth Hub,<br>Holborn hill,<br>Belturbet | 087 3501287              |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | <b>SOUTH EAST CAVAN - BOUNCE BACK YOUTH SERVICE</b><br>Adult Education Centre,<br>Virginia Road,<br>Ballyjamesduff                        | 087 7684757              |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | <b>YOUTH WORK IRELAND MONAGHAN:</b><br><br><b>CASTLEBLAYNEY YOUTH CENTRE</b><br>Child Wellbeing Centre,<br>Castleblayney                  | 042 9751979              |
| Clones Youth Centre is a hub of activity for young people and community of Clones and surrounding areas. It is the primary base for Include Youth Service, Cavan Comhairle na nÓg, Monaghan Comhairle na nÓg, YWICM Counselling Service and more. Clones Youth Club offers a wide range of exciting and innovative programmes and activities.*                                                                                                     | <b>CLONES INCLUDE YOUTH CENTRE</b><br>Church hill,<br>Clones                                                                              | 047 20096 / 087 1449406  |
| Carrickmacross Youth Centre is the base for the CMX Youth Information Team. Club offers a wide range of programmes, activities and resources from the CMX centre.*                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <b>YOUTHERS ZONE</b><br>Carrickmacross,<br>Farney Street,<br>Carrickmacross,<br>Monaghan                                                  | 042 966104 / 087 9057598 |
| Ballybay (Include) Youth Centre is a brand new youth centre opened by Include Youth Service in 2022 and serves young people and the community of Ballybay and surrounding areas. Club offers a wide range of high quality programmes and activities from Ballybay.*                                                                                                                                                                                | <b>BALLYBAY YOUTH CENTRE</b><br>Birch Court,<br>Ballybay,<br>Monaghan                                                                     | 086 7791685              |

\* For current opening hours, information on our programmes or to find out more about any aspect of what we are up to in your community please check out our Social Media or download the Connecting You App for free on the App Store or Play Store.

## Appendix A: Useful Contacts

| USEFUL CONTACTS NAME                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | ADDRESS                                                          | CONTACT                           |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <b>SCHOOL COMPLETION PROJECT</b><br><br>SCP is a Department of Education programme aimed at positively promoting young people's attendance, participation, and retention in schools. We work with young people in primary and post primary school and deliver a range of evidence based and evidence informed programmes that assist young people to complete school and provide supports that will ensure that their day-to-day experience in school is less challenging. We work in school, afterschool and with out of school students. Programmes run in group, individual, whole class depending on the needs identified through a referral process. The programme is led out by the Coordinator, with skilled Project workers based in DEIS Schools delivering interventions on a day-to-day basis. We work closely with HSCL, EWO, School Principals and with Voluntary and Statutory Agencies. | <b>CAVAN SCP</b><br>Breifne College,<br>Cavan                    | 086 1703833                       |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | <b>MONAGHAN SCP</b><br>Castleblayney/ Clones                     | 087 1758252                       |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | North Monaghan                                                   | 087 3169462                       |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Farney Carrickmacross                                            | 0873169460                        |
| <b>FOCUS FAMILY RESOURCE CENTRE</b><br><br>FRCs are participative and empowering organisations that support families while building the capacity and leadership of local communities. FRCs provide a range of universal and targeted services and development opportunities that address the needs of families. Actively working with individuals, families and the community to make a difference by creating a warm, caring non-judgemental service that meets ever-changing needs through listening, support, education and advocacy.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Portaliffe Centre,<br>Main Street,<br>Killeshandra,<br>Co. Cavan | 049 4364065<br>focusfrc@gmail.com |

| USEFUL CONTACTS NAME                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | ADDRESS                                                                              | CONTACT                               |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <b>TEACH OSCAIL FAMILY RESOURCE CENTRE</b><br><br>FRC offers one to one family support and parenting programmes via drop in and/or referrals to families struggling with a variety of issues or challenges at home. Young people between 16 and 24 can access a Level Up programme which aims to encourage, enable, and assist young people who are currently out of the education system or are unemployed to access a tailored programme delivered locally for a range of soft and employability skills. | 31 Church Street,<br>Mainstreet,<br>Cavan Town,<br>H12 H049                          | 049 4372730<br>info@teachoscailfrc.ie |
| <b>TEACH NA DAOINE FAMILY RESOURCE CENTRE</b><br><br>Family Resource Centre provide problem-solving, practical and therapeutic supports to help children and parents addressing any difficulties they are experiencing and to achieve their self-determined goals.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Oriel Way,<br>Monaghan                                                               | 047 71398<br>info@teachnadaoine.com   |
| <b>CLONES FAMILY RESOURCE CENTRE</b><br><br>The FRC provides individual programmes of family support designed to meet specific needs of parents, children and families.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Unit 5, Clones Business<br>Technology Park,<br>Jubilee Road,<br>Clones, Co. Monaghan | 047 52919<br>reception@clonesfrc.ie   |

# Appendix A: Useful Contacts

| USEFUL CONTACTS NAME                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | ADDRESS                                                                                                                                                               | CONTACT                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>FORÓIGE</b><br><br>Foróige is a voluntary led youth organisation, working with young people since 1952. The purpose is to enable young people to involve themselves consciously and actively in their development and in the development of society. Foróige works with young people aged 8-25 years old and families through volunteer-led Clubs and Groups and staff-led targeted Youth Projects and Services. These targeted projects and services are generally in partnership with various voluntary and statutory agencies. | <b>CAVAN 365 PROJECT</b><br>Youth Diversion Project,<br>Tullacmongan Resource Centre,<br>Cavan town and<br>Bailieborough Courthouse,<br>Main Street,<br>Bailieborough | <b>Ciara McPhillips</b><br><i>(Youth Justice Worker)</i><br>086 7760189<br>ciara.mcphillips@foroige.ie<br><br><b>Lisa O'Neill</b><br><i>(Youth Justice Worker)</i><br>086 1735639<br>lisa.oneill@foroige.ie<br><br><b>Sharon Ivers</b><br><i>(Youth Justice Worker)</i><br>086 7791685<br>sharon.ivers@foroige.ie<br><br><b>Alma McCabe</b><br><i>(Youth Justice Worker)</i><br>086 6017534<br>alma.mccabe@foroige.ie<br><br><b>Freda Leahy</b><br><i>(Family Support Worker)</i><br>086 1361221<br>freda.leahy@foroige.ie |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | <b>YOUTH EDUCATION TRAINING INITIATIVE (YETI)</b><br>Tullacmongan Resource Centre, Killymooney Dr, Tullymongan Upper, and Bridge St, Cavan                            | <b>Cassandra Taaffe</b><br>086 1677092<br>cassandra.taaffe@foroige.ie                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | <b>CAVAN TOWN UBU YOUTH PROJECT</b><br>Bridge Street Youth & Community Centre, Bridge street, Cavan                                                                   | <b>Aisling Traynor</b><br>086 1364924<br>aisling.traynor@foroige.ie<br><br><b>Colette Greene</b><br>086 1365354<br>colette.greene@foroige.ie                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |

| USEFUL CONTACTS NAME                 | ADDRESS                                                                                                                | CONTACT                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>FORÓIGE</b><br><i>(Continues)</i> | <b>ALTERNATIVES<br/>PROGRAMME CAVAN<br/>AND MONAGHAN</b>                                                               | <b>Lisa Atkinson</b><br>086 0762266<br>lisa.atkinson@foroige.ie                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|                                      | <b>MONAGHAN NYP</b><br>Youth Diversion Project<br>Monaghan NYP<br>Ardroe Hse Glen Rd.,<br>Monaghan<br>City of Monaghan | <b>Angela Curry</b><br><i>(Youth Justice Worker)</i><br>086 0209181<br>angela.curry@foroige.ie<br><br><b>Liam Mooney</b><br><i>(Youth Justice Worker)</i><br>086 0348984<br>liam.mooney@foroige.ie<br><br><b>Siobhan Collins</b><br><i>(Early Intervention Service Worker)</i><br>086 1279527<br>siobhan.collins@foroige.ie<br><br><b>Amie McQuillan</b><br><i>(Family Support Worker)</i><br>086 1537505<br>amie.mcquillan@foroige.ie |
|                                      | <b>MONAGHAN INTEGRATED<br/>YOUTH PROJECT</b>                                                                           | <b>Eithne Daly</b><br>086 6017532<br>eithne.daly@foroige.ie<br><br><b>Trevor Power</b><br>086 6017530<br>trevor.power@foroige.ie                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|                                      | <b>REGIONAL YOUTH<br/>DEVELOPMENT</b>                                                                                  | <b>Erica Reade</b><br>086 3880717<br>erica.reade@foroige.ie                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|                                      | <b>YOUTHRIVE</b>                                                                                                       | <b>Nichola Fannin</b><br>086 0352256<br>nichola.fannin@foroige.ie                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |

## Appendix A: Useful Contacts

| USEFUL CONTACTS NAME                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | ADDRESS                                                                                                                         | CONTACT                                                                                 |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>CMETB YOUTHREACH</b><br><br>CMETB Youthreach is an alternative education and training programme for young people aged between 16 and 20 years who have left school with few or no qualifications. It seeks to provide learners with knowledge and skills to help them to reach their full potential and enable them to progress to further education, training and employment. Each centre offers a wide variety of both accredited and non-accredited programmes, all delivered in caring, supportive and structured environments. Programmes run from September to July each year with referrals accepted throughout the year. | <b>CAVAN</b><br>Moynehall,<br>Ballinagh Road,<br>Cavan,<br>Co. Cavan<br>H12 C9C1                                                | <b>Sabrina McEntee</b><br>049 4361573<br>sabrinamcentee@cmetb.ie                        |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <b>COOTEHILL</b><br>67 Market Street,<br>H16 Cootehill,<br>Co. Cavan                                                            | <b>Mike Durkan</b><br>049 5552561 or 087 6523517<br>mikedurkan@cmetb.ie                 |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <b>KINGSCOURT</b><br>Kingscourt Youthreach<br>The Railway Station<br>Carrickmacross Road<br>Kingscourt<br>Co. Cavan<br>A82 H9H6 | <b>Michael Murphy</b><br>042 9693794 or 087 1439306<br>michaelmurphy@cmetb.ie           |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <b>MONAGHAN</b><br>Knockaconny,<br>Monaghan,<br>Co. Monaghan                                                                    | <b>Niall McCann</b><br>047 83554 or 087 2673180<br>niallmccann@cmetb.ie                 |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <b>CARRICKMACROSS</b><br>20 Main St, Carrickmacross,<br>Co. Monaghan,<br>A81 D735                                               | <b>Bernadette Duffy</b><br>042 9673906 or 087 6745788<br>bernadetteduffy@cmetb.ie       |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <b>CASTLEBLANEY</b><br>Lakeview Business Park,<br>Castleblaney,<br>Co. Monaghan                                                 | <b>David McAdam</b><br>042 9749356 or 087 1869309<br>davidmcadam@cmetb.ie               |
| <b>CAVAN TRAVELLER MOVEMENT (CTM)</b><br><br>Cavan Traveller Movement (CTM) is a new emerging Traveller organization that seeks to promote Traveller's social, economic and cultural rights across Cavan County. The work of CTM is underpinned by the principles of community development. We work in solidarity with the settled community to create a safe space for Travellers to come together, share ideas and discuss issues that are impacting on the community.                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                 | <b>Chrissie O'Sullivan</b><br><i>(Project Coordinator)</i><br>049 4356156 or 0871753007 |



# Appendix B: Step by Step Meitheal Guide

## STAGE 1: PREPARATION

- Consider whether a Meitheal is necessary. Talk to the young person/parents using the *Parent's Information Leaflet* and *Children and Young Person's Information Leaflet* as a guide.
- Secure written consent by completing the Meitheal Request Form and return to Senior Child and Family Support Network (CFSN) Coordinator.
- Liaise with CFSN Coordinator for support.

## STAGE 2: DISCUSSION

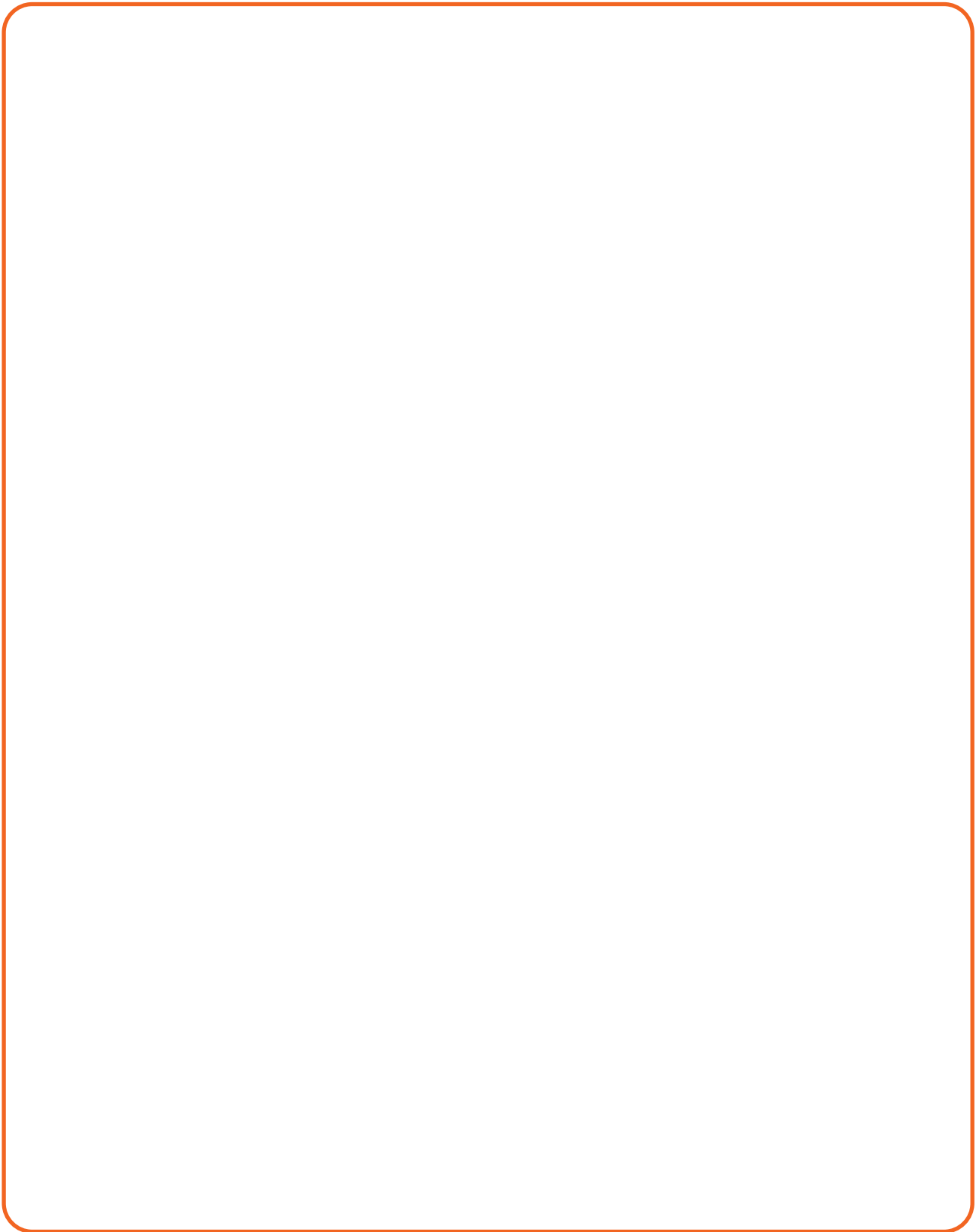
- With the parent and young person, complete the *Strengths and Needs Form* identify strengths and needs and desired outcomes which will inform an outcomes-focused action plan for the child/young person.
- Use the **"my world triangle"** to guide the discussion.
- Keep the identification of strengths and needs concise and use clear, simple, plain English.
- Parents and young person will identify who they want to attend the Meitheal meetings, e.g. Representatives from school (Year head, guidance counsellor, SCP, HSCL, Principal etc.), EWO, Family support worker, CAMHS, addiction support workers etc.

## STAGE 3: DELIVERY

- Assign a facilitator/ chair/ minute taker. Contact your CFSN coordinator for support if needed.
- Meitheal support meetings provide an opportunity for practitioners and families to discuss and identify additional needs and develop an action plan to meet them.
- It should lead to less duplication of services and more effective integration of services.
- The plan will be monitored and reviewed at regular intervals appropriate to the needs of the young person's progress (usually every 6-8 weeks).
- *Planning and Review Form* will be completed and distributed following each meeting.
- The number of meetings will depend on the needs of the young person and the *Closure and Feedback Form* will be completed at the final meeting.

# Appendix C: Tips/Resources for Teachers

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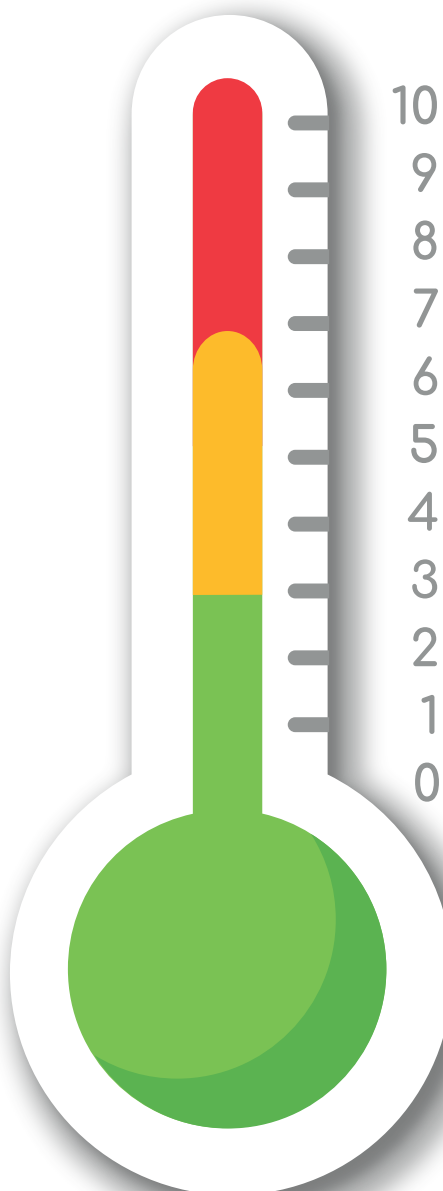
# Appendix C: Tips/Resources for Teachers

## FEELINGS THERMOMETER

FEELS THE WORST/  
VERY SCARY



FEELS THE BEST/  
NOT SCARY AT ALL



# Appendix C: Tips/Resources for Teachers

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- School Refusal Assessment Scale  
[www.oxfordclinicalpsych.com/view/10.1093/med:psych/9780195308297.001.0001/med-9780195308297-interactive-pdf-004.pdf](http://www.oxfordclinicalpsych.com/view/10.1093/med:psych/9780195308297.001.0001/med-9780195308297-interactive-pdf-004.pdf)
- Self Regulation  
<https://self-reg.ca/infographics/reframe/>

## Notes

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