

## Emotionally related school avoidance (ERSA) support plan

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# Support plan (option 1)

The emotionally related school avoidance (ERSA) support plan is a tool and intervention to help schools, parents, carers, and the child or young person identify achievable goals. These goals will help the child or young person move towards greater school attendance and engagement in education, and will include the necessary provisions and key stakeholders required for support. The ERSA support plan should be completed alongside the child or young person and a trusted adult to ensure that the goals and support are agreed upon by all parties involved, and that the child’s or young person’s voice is heard.

The child or young person may be able to provide valuable information to create a successful ERSA support plan, including examples of support that has previously helped, steps towards goals that feel manageable for them, and key people they want to support them. Examples of strategies for an ERSA support plan that can be suggested to the child or young person follow towards the end of the document. The ERSA support plan should be reviewed at regular intervals to track progress and amend if necessary.

# Support plan: ERSA person centred path (PCPath) (option 2)

The PCPath is a tool you can use to support a child or young person with ERSA towards a specific goal or dream for the future, to work out the actions that need to be taken to make that happen, or when a situation would benefit from group planning and focusing on the future.

When using the PCPath, a group of people chosen by the child or young person along with the child or young person themselves, or just the child or young person individually, work alongside a facilitator to use the PCPath template. They will develop achievable and realistic goals for the future based on ‘the dream’ and implement backwards planning to create a step-by-step path to reaching that goal.

It has a very clear structure and commits to tasks within a given timescale, while always maintaining focus on the hopes and goals of the child or young person.

## How to use it

Using a very large sheet of paper with the PCPath template drawn on it, the group and/or young person is guided by the facilitator through the process, and the plan is recorded in words and pictures.

* Firstly, they look at the young person’s dreams. No limits or constraints are placed on the dreams or the ideal future that they illuminate, allowing the young person to express what matters most to them. Based on these dreams and the young person’s vision for the future, specific goals that are positive and possible are identified.
* Next, they imagine possible and positive achievements and goals that could be reached over the next one to two years.
* This is then compared to how the young person’s life is ‘now’, with current strengths identified. The skills that need to be developed or what needs to be put in place to help reach the one to two year goals are highlighted.
* Finally, the next steps needed to achieve the goals are planned, along with identifying the people who can help the young person reach their goals, and what they need to do to stay strong and motivated. For some examples, please refer to the ERSA support strategies at the end of this document.

A key to this planning process lies in identifying who will be responsible for what in helping the child or young person achieve their goals. This allows the child or young person, family members, other community members, and school staff to make specific commitments to take action. Usually, opportunities to review the young person’s goals and update actions are provided.

**ERSA support plan (option 1)**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Support plan for: | | |
| Date my views were gathered: | | |
| At school, these things are working well: | | |
| **Smiley face with thumbs up** | | |
| When I don’t want to go to or be at school, I notice these things about myself: | | |
| Goggle eys | | |
| When I don’t want to go to school or be at school, others may notice these things about me: | | |
| Goggle eyes | | |
| My short-term targets to help me attend school are: | | |
| Identify manageable and achievable steps towards successful school attendance. This can include attending school for a half a day, developing strategies to control anxiety, or joining a lunchtime club.  Bullseye  target | | |
| At school, my key adult(s) that support me are: | | |
| My key adult(s):  When I can speak with my key adult(s):  Cartoon boy Holding Key  Where I can speak with my key adult(s): | | |
| The things that could be even better and adapted to support my attendance are: | | |
| Identify any changes to the timetable that could be made (for example: changes to days and times, what should happen in school and where to go in school).  Identify other changes to routines (for example: adapting breaks and lunchtimes or implementing changes between lessons), classroom expectations (for example: not being expected to read aloud or work in pairs) or homework.  School book | | |
| Things I can do to make myself feel better when I’m at school: | | |
| **Smiley face with thumbs up** | | |
| Things that other people (school staff and friends) can do to help me feel better when I’m at school: | | |
| **Cartoon group of people** | | |
| Places in school I can go to where I feel safe and supported: | | |
|  | | |
| Things that everyone at home can do to support me to attend school: | | |
| House | | |
| Things that other key adults outside of school (such as a grandparent or family friend) can do to support me to attend school: | | |
| Cartoon boy Holding Key | | |
| My views are important, and this plan is designed to support my return to school. The next step is to try out the plan and review it regularly so that it remains helpful. | | |
| Review date: | | |
| I give my consent to share this plan with other professionals who may want to help me. | | |
| My signature | **Key adult’s signature** | **Parent or carer signature** |
|  |  |  |
| Other people who have access to this plan are: | | |
|  | | |

With thanks to guidance from the West Sussex Educational Psychology Service, from which this ERSA support plan has been adapted.

To be printed in A3

**Dream (1)**

**ERSA support plan**

**Option 2: ERSA person centred path**

**Next   
steps (7)**

**If on a reduced timetable,** when will I be in school?

This includes days and timings.

**Review date:**

To review:

What is working well?

What needs to change?

What are the next steps?

**Who can help me? (6)**

At school, my key adults that support me are:

When I can speak with my key adults:

Where I can speak with my key adults:

Things that everyone at home can do to support me to attend school:

Things that key adults outside of school can do to support me to attend school:

**What needs to change? (5)**

Things I can do to make myself feel better when I’m at school:

Things other people (such as school staff and friends) can do to help me feel better when I’m at school:

Places in school I can go to where I feel safe and supported:

**Goals or targets (2)**

**Even better ifs (4)**

The things that could be even better and adapted to support my attendance are:

**All about me now (3)**

My strengths:

At school, these things are working well:

Things people may need to know about me:

Example of strategies for ERSA support plan

Having a reduced timetable

Checking in with a   
safe adult at the beginning, middle and end of the day

Having a safe space in the school I can go to

(where or when?)

Being able to leave lessons five minutes   
early to avoid crowds

Soft start, for example: coming into school after everyone else so   
that it is quieter and meeting with a safe adult

Safe adult meeting   
me every day at the   
gate or by my locker

Having jobs to do at   
the beginning of the day or during the day

Uniform accommodations

Being able to leave   
school five minutes   
early to avoid crowds

Having a   
“I need a break card”

Having a safe space in school where I can go to at break and lunchtime

Entering the classroom before or after everyone

Example of strategies for ERSA support plan



Having an intervention during a disliked lesson

Having a visual card to ask for help in lessons

Having clear routines and structure

Having task management boards in lessons

Skip lunch queue card

Not being expected to read aloud in lessons or answer questions if my hand is   
not up

Taking exams in a separate space

Toileting   
accommodations

Using alternative methods of recording

Not attending   
assemblies

Being able to join lessons remotely from a safe space in school

Bringing in a transitional object