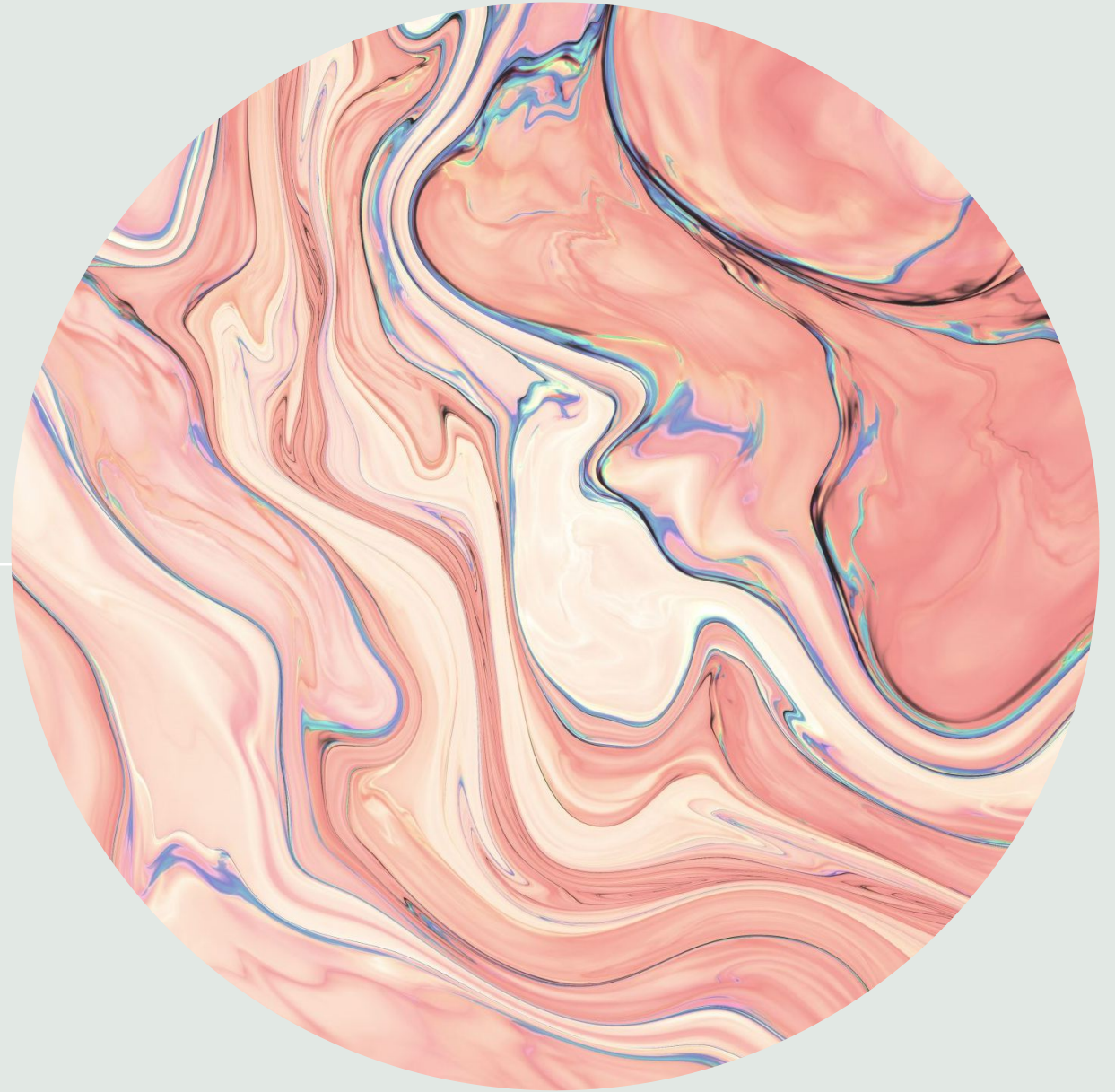


Managing Anxiety and Attendance

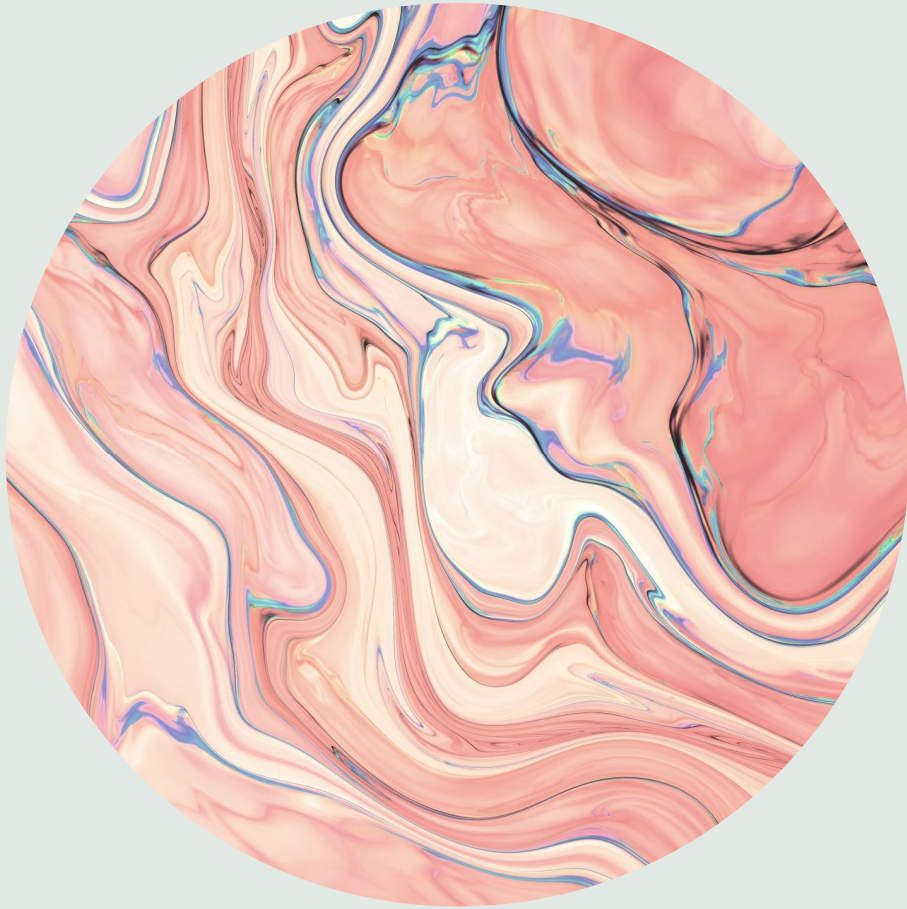
Cluster Community Coffee
Morning

Ceri Porteous- School Nurse

Aimi McIntosh- Depute Head at Trinity
Primary



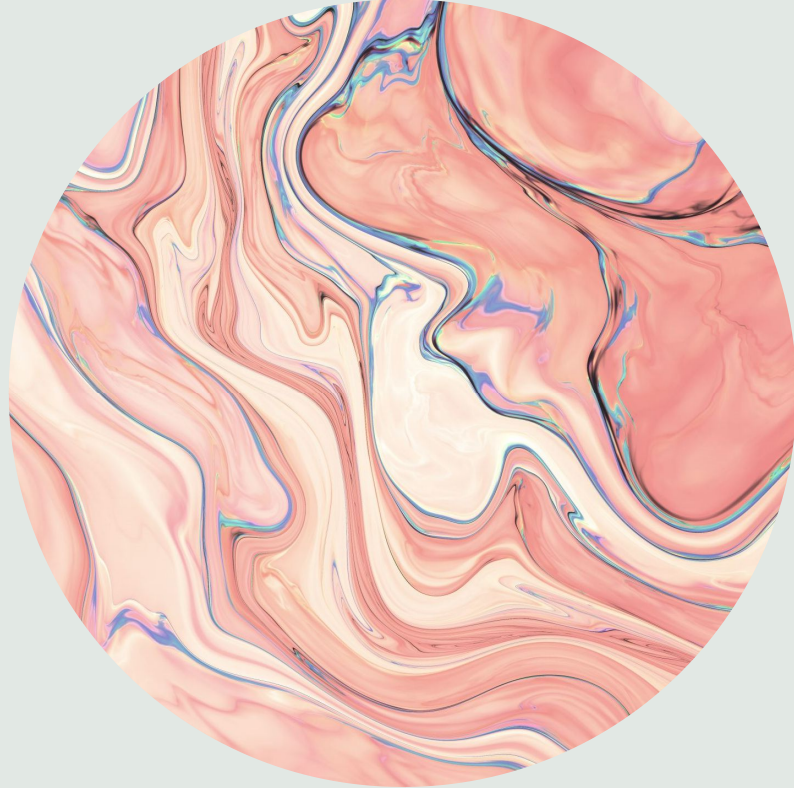
Aims of this morning



- Discuss exactly what anxiety is and how it can manifest in any child or young person
- Learn about coping mechanisms and strategies which can be used at home
- Find out about school support and strategies
- Signpost for further resources and information
- Provide a forum for parents and carers to come together to get advice and share views



What is anxiety?



Anxiety is a feeling that we all experience at times. People might use words like being anxious, worried, nervous or afraid to describe feelings of anxiety.

Anxiety is linked to our thoughts, our body and our actions (what we do).

It is normal and useful to have some anxiety in our lives. Anxiety helps to keep us safe from danger. Having a little bit of anxiety can be helpful, for example, it can help us concentrate and think quickly.

Anxiety can get in the way for us and become a difficulty if:

- We feel anxious often or feel extremely anxious at times when there is no real danger.
- Anxiety stops us from doing things.

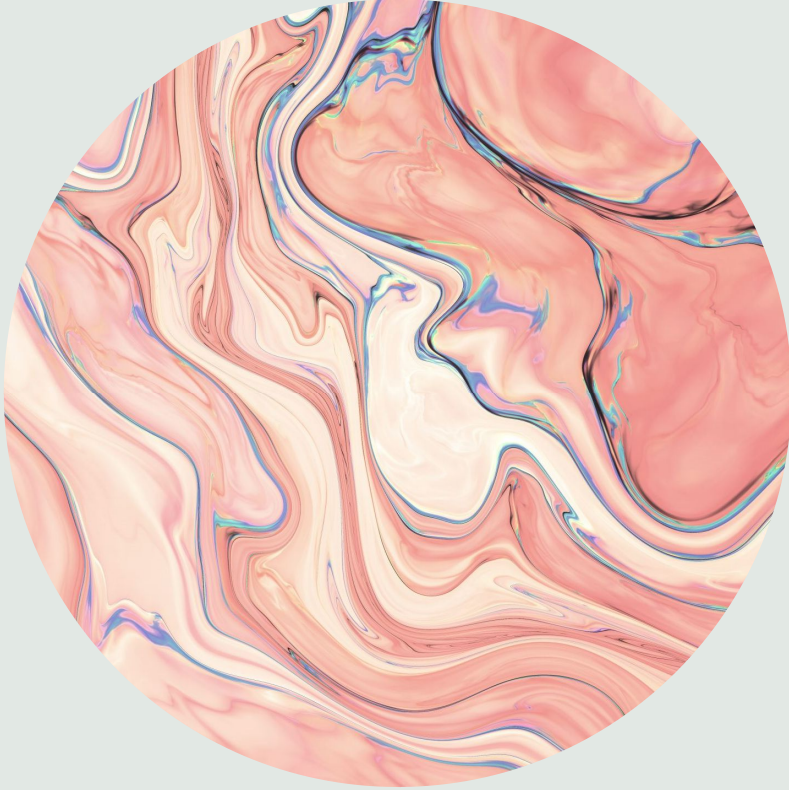
Experiencing difficulties with anxiety is common, **1 in 6** young people will experience difficulties with anxiety at some point in their lives.



Managing Anxiety in children and young people

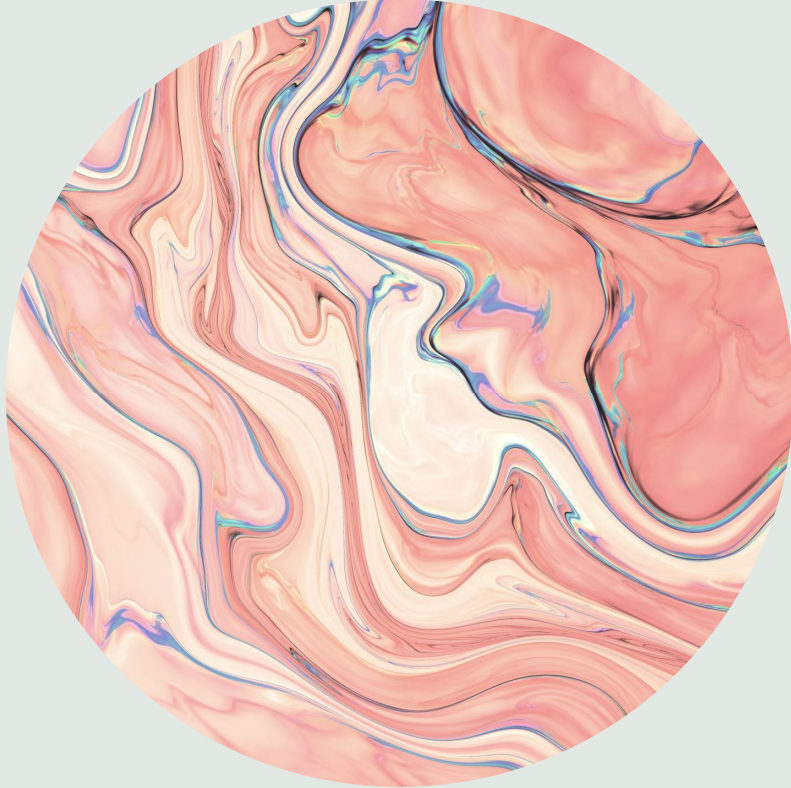
- Experiencing anxiety and worry is normal and common in people of all ages. While we all experience anxiety sometimes, there are times when anxiety and worry can feel very difficult to manage and can have a big impact on really important aspects of our lives. _____
- Common types of anxiety in children and young people include:
 - Fear of specific things (e.g. dogs) or of places (e.g. the dentist)
 - Fear of being separated from your family
 - Fear of the unknown or uncertainty
 - Fear of social situations
 - Panic: Fear of disaster or being out of control
 - Worries about upcoming changes- such as changing school.
- For children and young people experiencing these difficulties, learning a little more about anxiety and ways of overcoming it can be helpful.

How anxiety manifests and presents:



- Physical symptoms; stomachaches, headaches, soreness - complaints of ailments, tiredness
- Emotional symptoms; worry, irritability, restlessness, tearful, angry outbursts
- Behavioral symptoms; avoidance - certain situations or activities, impact on social interactions, difficulty concentrating, reassurance seeking, change in behavior with food/ sleep, reluctance to separate from caregivers

What can be done at home?

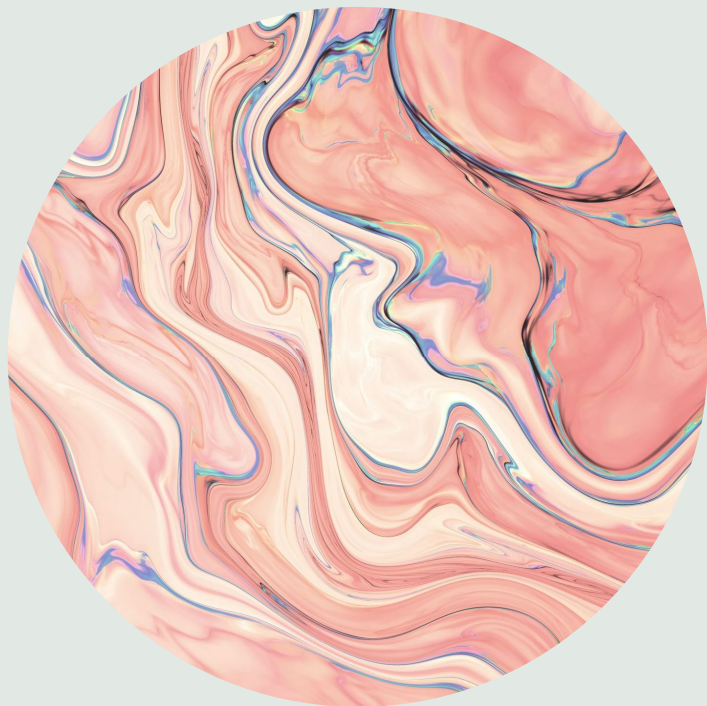


- Good communication - encouraging open and honest conversation with your child/ young person. Creating time to have conversations. Consider informing school
- Validate feelings - recognise stressors, provide reassurance
- Teach and use coping skills - coping thoughts, breathing techniques, gradual muscle relaxation, calm imagery
- Establish routines/maintain boundaries - eg. bedtime routine
- Encourage healthy habits - physical activity, limit screen time, enough sleep

Most episodes of anxiety are very normal and can be supported by families, however, if you are concerned then we would advise seeking help and advice from professionals.



Question Time

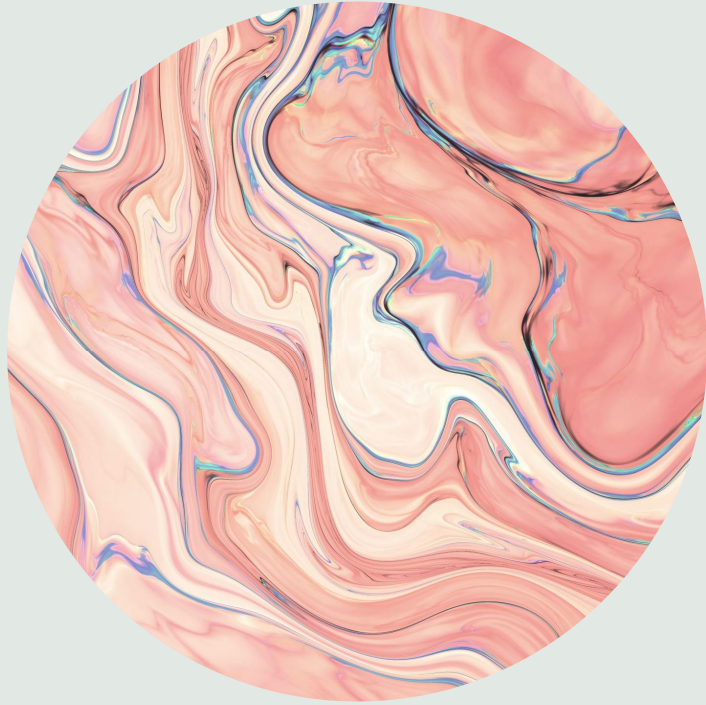




GIRFEC

- Our commitment to provide all learners and families with the right support they need to flourish
- GIRFEC provides Scotland with a consistent framework and shared language for promoting, supporting, and safeguarding the wellbeing of children and young people.

How we support in school



- Building resilience programme
- Collaborate with other professionals (school counsellor, school nurse, EWO, Educational Psychologist, Citadel)
- Building positive relationships with our learners
- Encouraging open dialogue with our learners- having safe adults to talk about emotions
- Create a safe and calm learning environment (consider quiet spaces, sensory needs etc)
- Teach coping strategies (Zones of regulation and or Emotions Talks)

Building Resilience

CITY OF EDINBURGH'S HEALTH AND WELLBEING PROGRAMME 'BUILDING RESILIENCE' AIMS TO TAKE CHILDREN ON A PERSONAL JOURNEY TO LOOK AT WHAT INFLUENCES THEIR MENTAL HEALTH AND EMOTIONAL WELLBEING, THROUGH THE MIX OF TEACHING, REFLECTION, MULTIMEDIA AND INTERACTIVE ACTIVITIES.

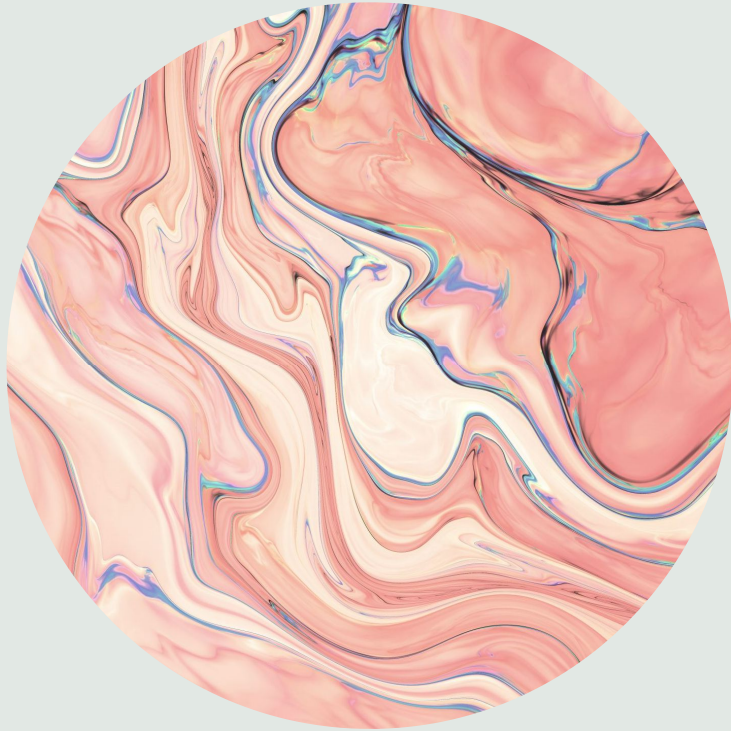


Encouraging open dialogue with our learners

Why it is important to
talk about emotions

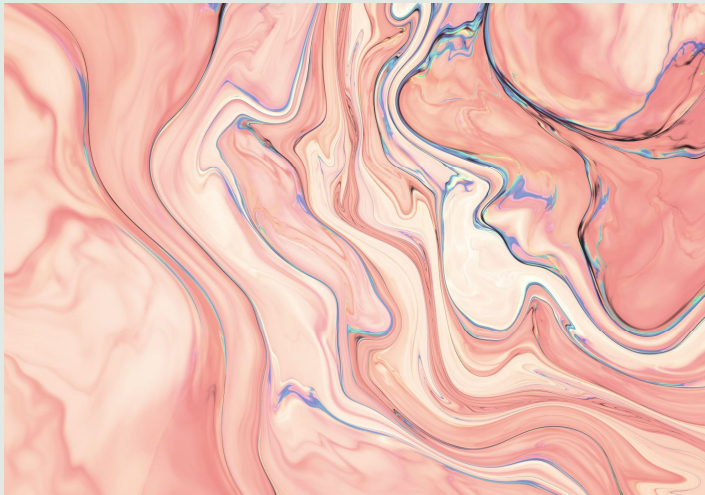


Speak to your school- understand the triggers



- Talk to a teacher or one of the senior leadership team about your concerns
- School can offer varying advice to support with your child's anxiety
- School and home need to work in partnership to problem solve the root of the anxiety

Common supports and strategies



- Look at changing the **environment**- seating plans, working with supportive peers, quiet spaces etc
- Opportunities for **sensory** to reduce anxiety- outdoor learning, fidget toys
- **Relaxation** and calming activities
- **Visual timetables**- learners know what to expect when they come to school
- Looking at the **school day**- early start or arriving later
- **Alternative** plans for break and lunch times
- **Brain breaks** or ensuring rest time in between learning to help feel calmer
- **Remove specific lessons** or times of the day that a child finds difficult
- Support the child to experience **success** in school to help boost their self esteem and confidence

When anxieties can lead to poor attendance



- Sometimes anxieties can lead to poor school attendance. There are many aspects of school setting that may cause anxiety, such as separation from parents/carers, social interaction with peers and school staff, academic stress
- It is important that you contact the school if you think your child is not attending due to anxieties

Attendance



 **Trinity Community Cluster** Trinity Community School
every day in school counts

 **VICTORIA PRIMARY SCHOOL**
SINCE 1944

to learn and achieve to experience new things to make friends

Days Missed	Percentage	Status
0	100%	WE'RE DONE
5	97%	WE'RE DONE
9	95%	WE'RE CONCERNED
14	92%	WE'RE CONCERNED
19	90%	WE'RE WORRIED
26	85%	WE'RE WORRIED

Monday
Tuesday
Wednesday
Thursday
Friday

Sometimes things happen, in or out of school, that make attending difficult. Please get in touch with your child's school so that support can be offered because **every day counts!**

Education Welfare Officer



- The aim of EWO is to improve attendance, promote inclusion and support families.
- A referral can be made when a child's attendance drops to 85% or below.
- The EWO works together with families and other agencies to manage, develop and promote an effective responsive support service, ensuring that Educational Statutory Obligations are met.

Apps to support with anxiety

APPS	
Headspace	App for guided meditation and relaxation
Hospichill	Provides relaxation exercises such as visualisation and helps to prepare for hospital visits
Mindshift	Helps recognise physical symptoms and learn to use relaxation strategies, problem solving and challenge thinking patterns
Mood Kit	Provides distracting activities, a mood journal and aids thought challenging
Mood Tools	Provides guided meditations, an activity tracker and information about depression
Pacifica	App for anxiety including mood tracker, thought record, daily challenges, relaxation
Self-Help for Anxiety Management	App with relaxation guides for physical relaxation and breathing. Divides anxiety into thoughts, feelings, sensations
Smiling Mind	App for relaxation exercises, breathing exercises and mindfulness
Stop, Breathe and Think	Contains mindfulness meditations for teenagers
Virtual Hope Box	An app which aims to reduce stress and anxiety, by providing distracting games, guided meditation and controlled breathing.
What's Up?	App to help with breathing, recognising thinking patterns, keeping thought diaries and includes positive quotes
Worry Box	Helps you learn to manage worries through problem solving, coping statements, self-talk and mindfulness

Links to support with attendance

[Children and young people support |
Salvesen Mindroom Centre](#)

samh.org.uk/information-service

[Counselling for Young People - The
Spark](#)

[Not Fine in School - School Refusal,
School Attendance](#)

