SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND ANXIETY | ENGLAND

School Anxiety and Attendance Diary

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Record patterns around school attendance and anxiety, including sleep, mornings, lessons and recovery, to support a conversation about help.

This is a pattern diary, not a formal attendance record, and it is not evidence that anything has been "logged" with a local authority.

Who this is for

Parents and carers whose child is anxious about school or beginning to struggle to attend.

What is inside

- How to record useful notes
- Seven daily pages
- A pattern summary

Please read this first

This is a free starting-point resource from My SEND Friend. It is general information, not legal, medical or benefits advice, and it is not an official or government form. It does not guarantee an assessment, plan, adjustment, payment or any other outcome. Check current official guidance (for example GOV.UK) and get individual advice from SENDIASS, IPSEA or a suitably qualified adviser when you need it.

How to use this diary

Record what actually happened, without trying to make every day look the same. Note sleep, morning state, whether the child got in, what helped, and recovery afterwards. A week can already show a pattern.

If attendance is already a formal concern, keep this factual and get advice from SENDIASS if you need it. Official attendance rules can change — check current guidance.

Day 1

Short, factual notes are enough. Leave any box blank if it does not apply.

Date

Completed by

Parent, carer, or school

Sleep the night before, and how the morning felt

What happened about attending (got in, late, partial, or did not go)

If they went, what was hard or what helped during the day

After school or recovery

Anything else that seems connected (health, change, sensory load)

Day 2

Short, factual notes are enough. Leave any box blank if it does not apply.

Date

Completed by

Parent, carer, or school

Sleep the night before, and how the morning felt

What happened about attending (got in, late, partial, or did not go)

If they went, what was hard or what helped during the day

After school or recovery

Anything else that seems connected (health, change, sensory load)

Day 3

Short, factual notes are enough. Leave any box blank if it does not apply.

Date

Completed by

Parent, carer, or school

Sleep the night before, and how the morning felt

What happened about attending (got in, late, partial, or did not go)

If they went, what was hard or what helped during the day

After school or recovery

Anything else that seems connected (health, change, sensory load)

Day 4

Short, factual notes are enough. Leave any box blank if it does not apply.

Date

Completed by

Parent, carer, or school

Sleep the night before, and how the morning felt

What happened about attending (got in, late, partial, or did not go)

If they went, what was hard or what helped during the day

After school or recovery

Anything else that seems connected (health, change, sensory load)

Day 5

Short, factual notes are enough. Leave any box blank if it does not apply.

Date

Completed by

Parent, carer, or school

Sleep the night before, and how the morning felt

What happened about attending (got in, late, partial, or did not go)

If they went, what was hard or what helped during the day

After school or recovery

Anything else that seems connected (health, change, sensory load)

Day 6

Short, factual notes are enough. Leave any box blank if it does not apply.

Date

Completed by

Parent, carer, or school

Sleep the night before, and how the morning felt

What happened about attending (got in, late, partial, or did not go)

If they went, what was hard or what helped during the day

After school or recovery

Anything else that seems connected (health, change, sensory load)

Day 7

Short, factual notes are enough. Leave any box blank if it does not apply.

Date

Completed by

Parent, carer, or school

Sleep the night before, and how the morning felt

What happened about attending (got in, late, partial, or did not go)

If they went, what was hard or what helped during the day

After school or recovery

Anything else that seems connected (health, change, sensory load)

The pattern this week

What came up often, and what already helps

What I will take to a conversation with school

Useful next steps and sources

Use what helped in this pack and leave the rest. You can come back to it when you need to. Live tools on mysendfriend.co.uk remain free, including Help Me Now, the SEND Letter Builder, the Reasonable Adjustments Builder, the DLA and PIP Claim Planners, and the free resources hub. Saving work to My SEND Plan is optional.

Where to check official or independent information

Guidance and benefit rules can change. Check the current official position, and get individual advice when you need it.

- GOV.UK: Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)
- The SEND Code of Practice 2015 (England)
- The school's SEN information report and complaints policy
- Your local SENDIASS service
- IPSEA, for legally based information in England

A reminder about this free pack

This is a free starting-point resource from My SEND Friend. It is general information, not legal, medical or benefits advice, and it is not an official or government form. Using it does not start a statutory process or guarantee a particular outcome. Adapt every page to your situation.

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