



Parental Guidance: Anxiety in Young People

Anxiety is a common experience for many young people and can present in different ways at home and in school. While some anxiety is a normal part of growing up, ongoing or overwhelming worry can affect confidence, relationships and engagement with learning. This guidance aims to help families recognise signs of anxiety and use practical strategies to support their child calmly and consistently.

What anxiety can look like

Anxiety does not always appear as obvious worry. It may present differently depending on age and personality, including:

- Physical signs such as headaches, stomach aches, tiredness or restlessness.
- Avoidance of certain situations, lessons or social activities.
- Irritability, withdrawal or sudden changes in mood.
- Increased need for reassurance or difficulty with change.

These behaviours are often linked to feeling overwhelmed rather than a lack of effort or motivation.

Practical strategies to support at home

Small, consistent adjustments can make a significant difference:

- Keep routines predictable, particularly around mornings, homework and bedtime.
- Use calm, clear language and acknowledge feelings without dismissing them.
- Break tasks into smaller, manageable steps to reduce pressure.
- Praise effort and progress rather than focusing only on outcomes.

Consistency helps young people feel safe and reduces uncertainty.



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Responding when your child feels overwhelmed

When anxiety escalates, young people benefit from reassurance rather than pressure:

- Listen without rushing to solve the problem immediately.
- Encourage small steps forward rather than complete avoidance.
- Offer choices where possible to increase a sense of control.
- Model calm behaviour, as strong reactions can unintentionally increase anxiety.

The aim is to support gradual confidence rather than **removing all challenges**.

Supporting attendance and confidence in school

Maintaining regular attendance and connection with school is an important protective factor. Encouraging routines, celebrating small successes and maintaining communication with staff can help young people rebuild confidence during difficult periods.

Support available in the Academy

The Academy offers a range of pastoral and wellbeing support to help students manage anxiety and remain engaged in school life. Depending on individual needs, this may include:

- Regular pastoral check-ins with a trusted member of staff to provide reassurance, monitor wellbeing and set achievable short-term goals.
- Access to a structured Guided Self-Help programmes, where appropriate, focusing on understanding anxiety, building coping strategies and increasing emotional resilience.
- Ongoing communication with families to ensure consistent strategies between home and school.

Support is always tailored to the individual student and reviewed regularly to ensure it remains appropriate.

When to seek additional support

If anxiety begins to significantly affect sleep, relationships, learning or attendance, further support may be helpful. Families can speak with the Academy's pastoral team for guidance, or consider seeking advice from a GP or external wellbeing services where appropriate.

Working together, families and school can help young people feel understood, supported and able to manage anxiety in a healthy way.