



# Nessie EBSA Programme™

A joint approach to supporting children who are struggling to attend school



*Helping children and young people thrive*

# NESSIE

Helping Children & Young People Thrive

Providing easy access to arts therapy and counselling for children and young people

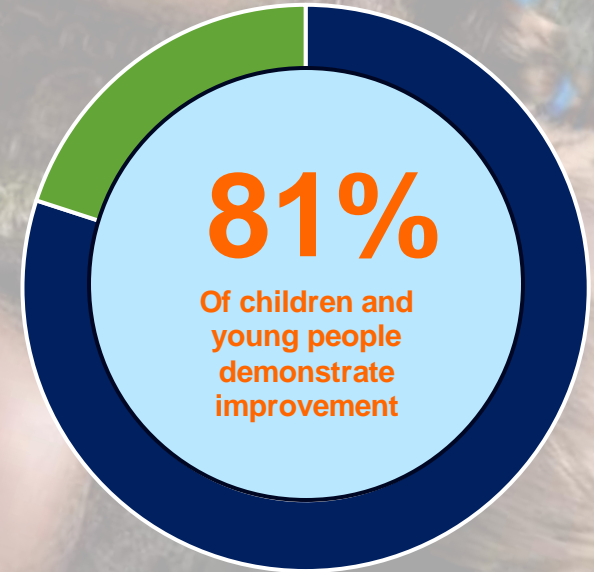
Not for profit social enterprise working in schools and community organisations in Hertfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough

Supporting young people with complex needs through an evidence based, child led, Partnership approach.

Community Interest Company Number 11719406

<https://Nessieined.com/>

Registered Office:  
KJAR Senior Site, Garden Walk, Royston, England, SG8 7JH



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Youth Support  
trusted Experienced  
community  
Evidence-based  
therapists child-led Parent  
strengths-focused Autism fun  
yrs. increase systemic  
flexible access Workers  
0-21 specialists  
Senco schools  
Support creative Arts  
partnerships

WordItOut

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## What is EBSA?

EBSA refers to reduced attendance or non-attendance at school where the difficulty is driven by emotional distress.

*(Lester and Michaelson, 2024)*



## Local Background - EBSA

The rate of pupils who miss 50% or more school sessions (severe absences) has increased over the past 6 years in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

Persistent absenteeism (attendance below 90%, equivalent of missing one day a fortnight of school) has approximately doubled in Cambridgeshire between academic years 2020-2021 and 2021-2022.

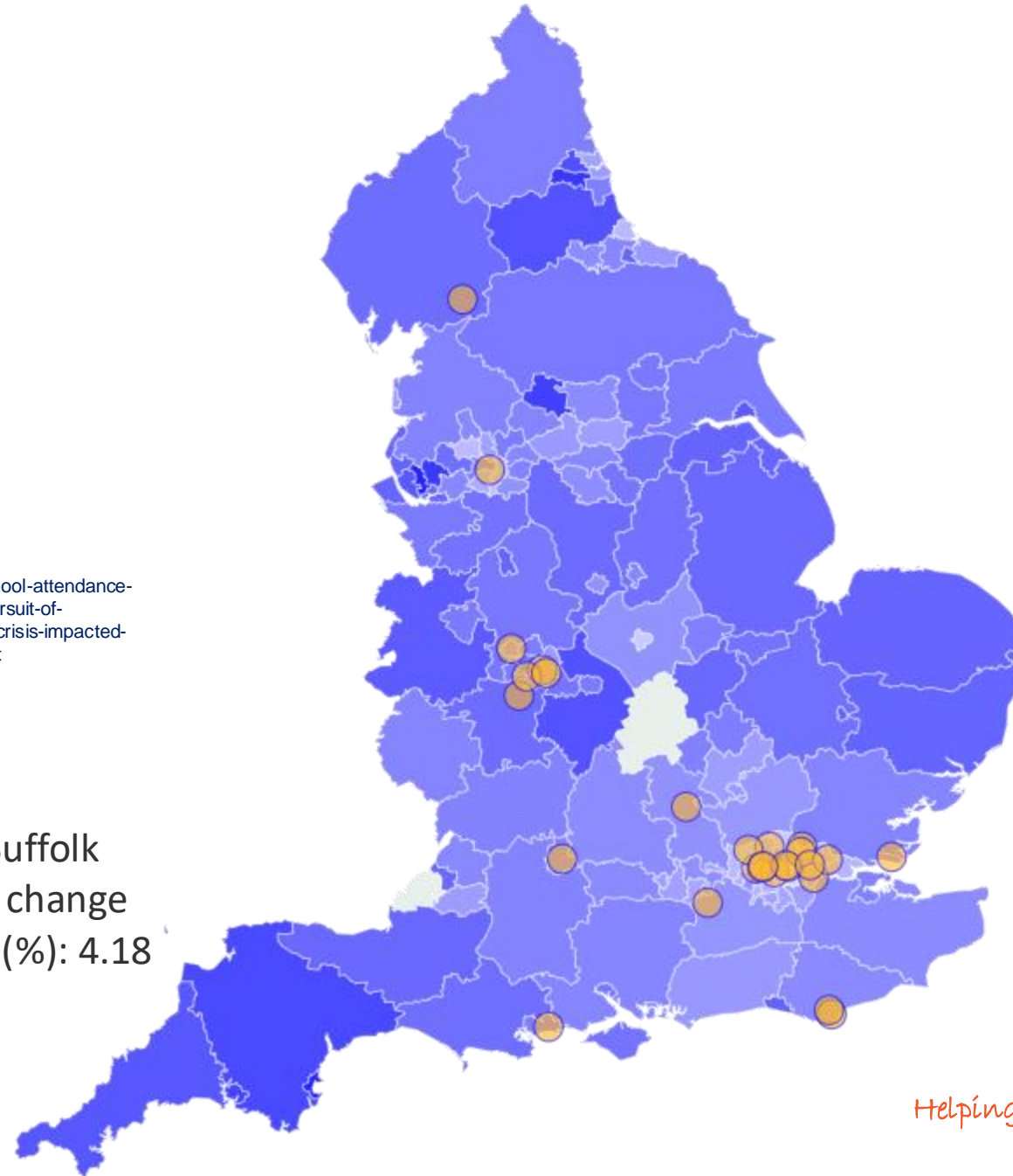
Primary school student persistent absence rate has nearly doubled from 7.97% to 16.49% and secondary school student persistent absence rate more than doubled from 12.69% to 26.88%.

# The change in absence between 2018-2019 and 2021-2022



<https://www.nesta.org.uk/report/school-attendance-analysing-causes-and-impact-in-pursuit-of-solutions/how-has-the-attendance-crisis-impacted-different-areas-of-england/#content>

- Local authority: Suffolk
- Percentage point change in overall absence (%): 4.18



- Local authority: Cambridgeshire
- Percentage point change in overall absence (%): 3.95

- Local authority: Peterborough
- Percentage point change in overall absence (%): 3.89

West Northamptonshire 0%

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## National Data

**Action for Children** surveyed over 700,00 teachers found:

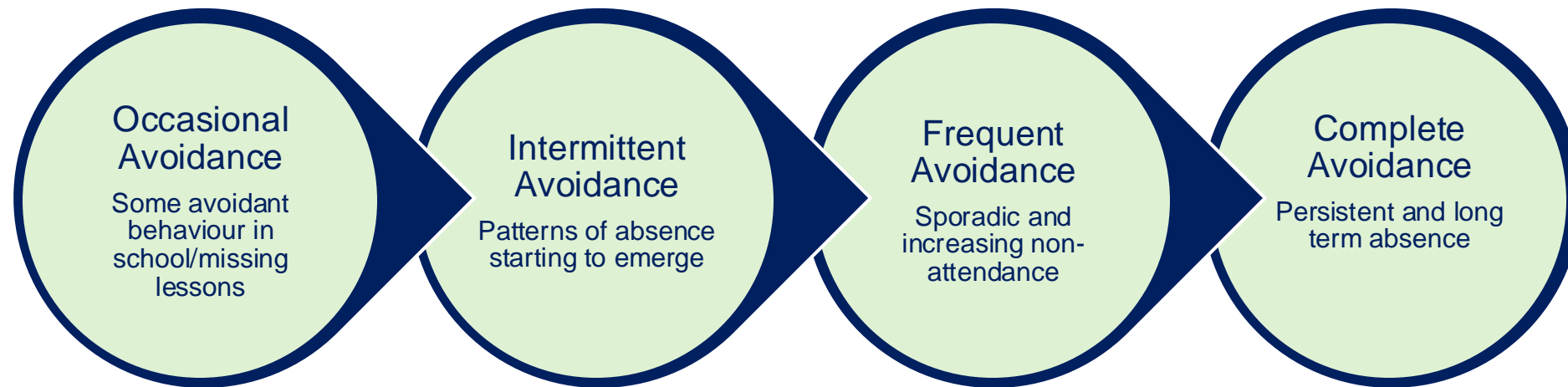
"Over 1.5 million children missed 10% or more of school in the academic year 2022/23, representing 21% of students, and 150,000 children missed 50% or more of school – a figure that has more than doubled since before the pandemic.

While school absence can be for many reasons, mental health issues and a lack SEN support are the most cited.

**Not Fine in School** surveyed over 2000 parents who reported:

19.3% of their children were not attending school with 78% citing anxiety and then sensory difficulties and friendship issues being the second and third most cited reasons.

# The Spectrum of EBSA





# Risk Factors

Home/community: Parent illness, bereavement, poverty, young carer, parent mental health, first or only child, attachment & trauma, need for parenting support

School: transitions, difficulties in accessing learning, friendship dynamics, academic demands, exams, relationship difficulties with staff

Child specific: sensitive nature, traumatic childhood – ACEs, illness, low confidence for learning, learning difficulties, ADHD, ASC or Learning difficulties, age in year, specific age, puberty – undiagnosed needs



## The Evidence:

The varied interacting risk factors for EBSA necessitate a multi-component approach, which cuts across education, health and social care, and voluntary sectors.

*(Lester and Michaelson, 2024)*

## The Recommendations:

- Do more to examine the root causes of absence and build the evidence base on what works to reduce it
- Gain a greater understanding of pupils' and parents' experiences
- Use evidence based approaches to explore reasons behind EBSA
- Work together to shift the social norms and culture around EBSA
- Use data to identify and support at-risk pupils
- learn from the small number of schools

Adapted from the Nesta report

## Aims:

Build capacity and a shared language and approach across the county so that CYP can thrive

Focus on early intervention to prevent, identify, and reduce CYP mental ill health, social anxiety and resulting EBSA

Enable school settings to respond, identify and support CYP to improve attendance whilst developing a whole school culture of inclusion, safety and emotional regulation

Work with existing key services to strengthen and promote the wider offer, reducing mental ill health, promoting access and reducing EBSA

Support families so that their children can thrive and access education

## Objective

To help CYP access education, fulfil their potential, be emotionally healthy, supported by positive relationships.

# A strengths-based approach

Developing aspirations  
& motivation

Increasing  
confidence and  
feeling of self-worth

Understanding and  
managing emotions

Feeling listened to and  
understood

Developing feeling of  
safety and sense of  
belonging

Having positive  
experiences

Embracing a flexible  
school approach

Working collaboratively  
with school, home and  
outside agencies

Supporting parents

# Nessie Levels of Support – EBSA programme

## Universal

- Task force of stakeholders: discuss/gather/feedback/co-ordinate
- Training support, resources, digital hub. Consultation & support for parents and schools
- CYP peer support in settings and online
- Parent participatory group
- Participatory groups initiated for CYP and parents

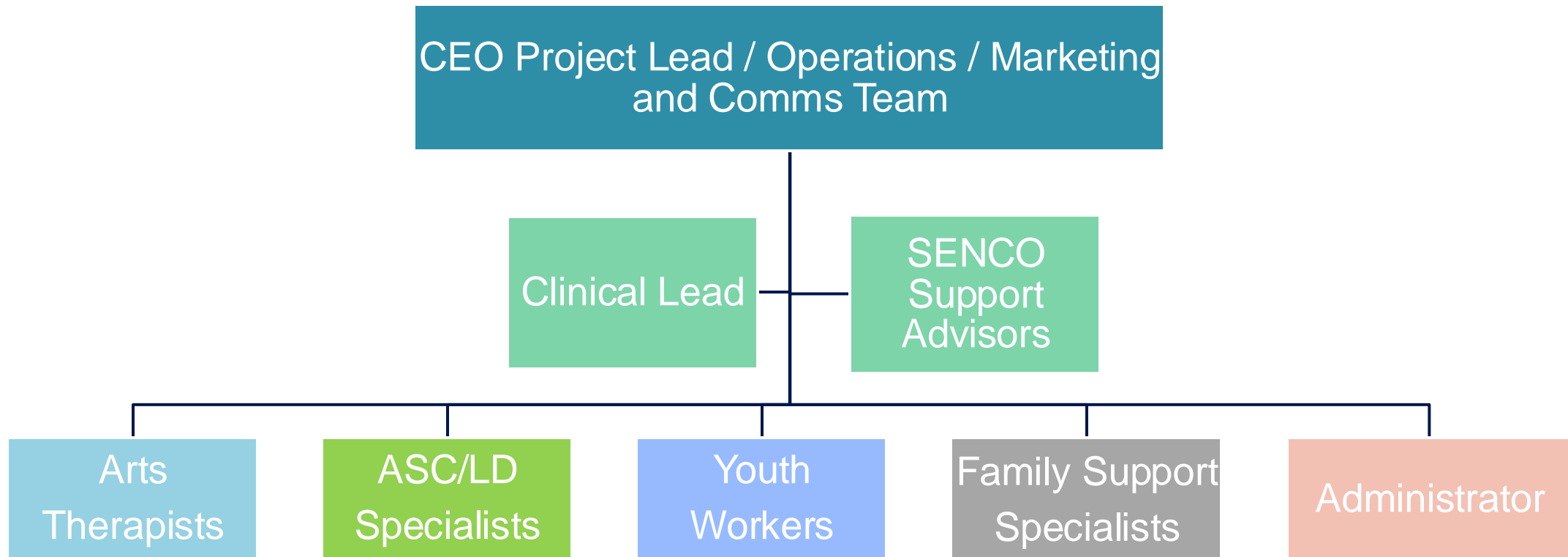
## Targeted

- Solution circle supervision for schools; SENCO support, bespoke CYP plans/profiles
- CYP assessment and planning support
- CYP peer support groups in school communities and helping schools to run interventions
- Parent /child SST solution focused therapy

## Specialist

- CYP 1-1 bespoke therapy
- ASC/LD specialist therapy
- CYP 1-1 youth work
- CYP Groups run by Nessie in the community or online
- SENCO consultancy and support for schools and parents

# Proposed Staffing Structure



# Mobilisation plan

April 2024 – July 25 (Cambridgeshire) and September 25 (Peterborough)

## April

Establishing Task group  
Developing resources  
Scoping need / gaps  
Defining the work  
Roll out prof training

## Autumn Term

Roll out schools training  
Roll out groups  
Target Primary settings  
Offer targeted model

## Spring Term

Targeted approach for secondary  
  
year 7,8 & 9 focus

## Summer Term

Steered by Task force to look at:  
Specialist support  
Complete Absence  
Complex needs  
Case studies – summarise findings



Purpose: To help CYP access education, fulfil their potential, be emotionally healthy, supported by positive relationships

### Problems

The rate of pupils who miss 50% or more school sessions (severe absences) has increased over the past 6 years in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

### Strategies

A tiered systemic approach aimed at developing a shared language and approach; upskilling and increasing capacity leading to increased wellbeing for CYP across both counties

### Outputs

Task Force  
Training supervision  
12-week programme to support CYP  
Targeted school support  
SENCO support  
Targeted CYP and family support

### Outcomes

System strengthened  
Number of targeted schools - capacity/ improved CYP wellbeing / attendance  
Number of CYP showing improved wellbeing  
Number of parents

Ultimate Impact: improve wellbeing and reduce levels anxiety of CYP across C & P

# Jahoda's definition of Mental health 1958

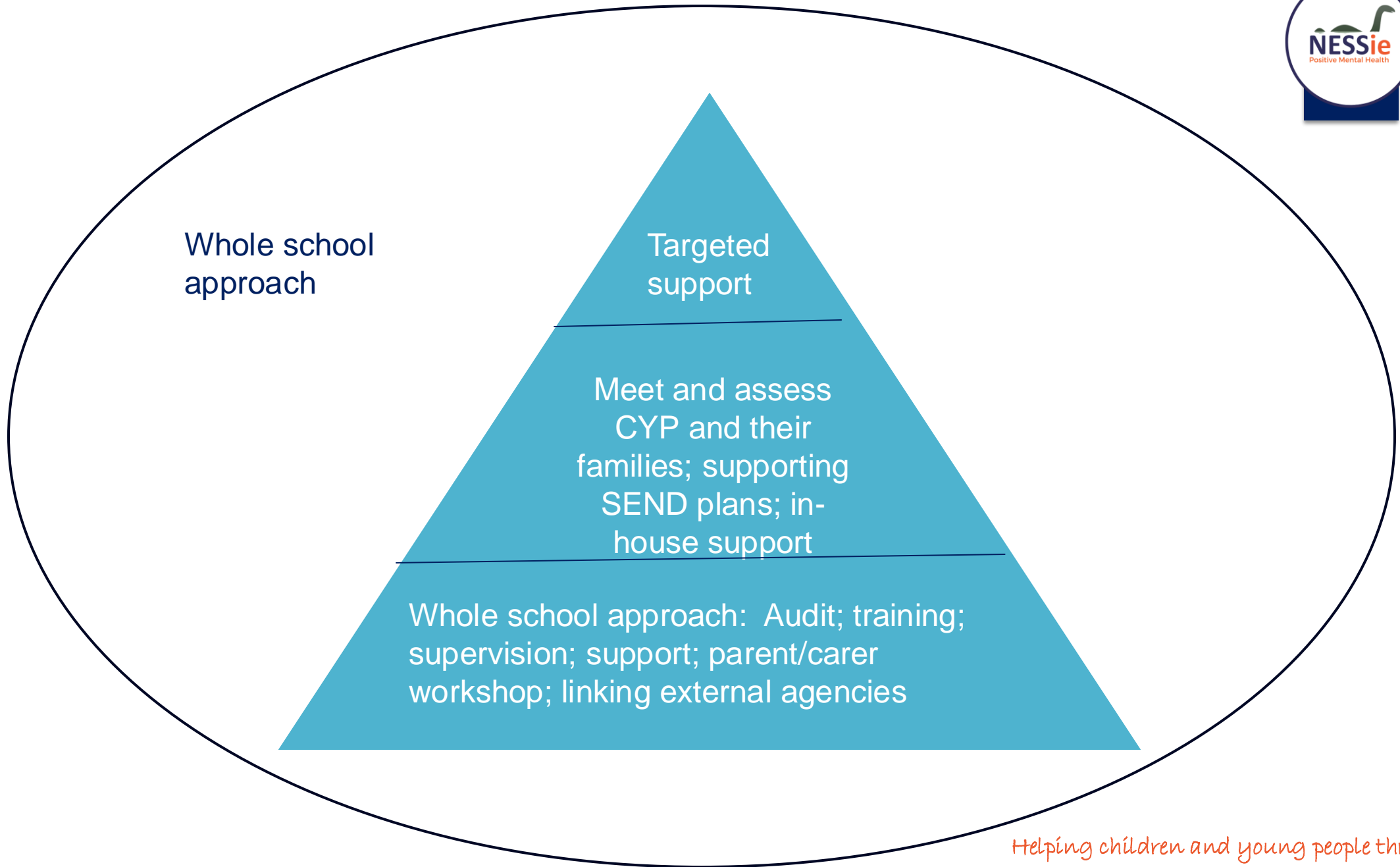
Mental health includes:

autonomy (being in touch with one's own identity and feelings);

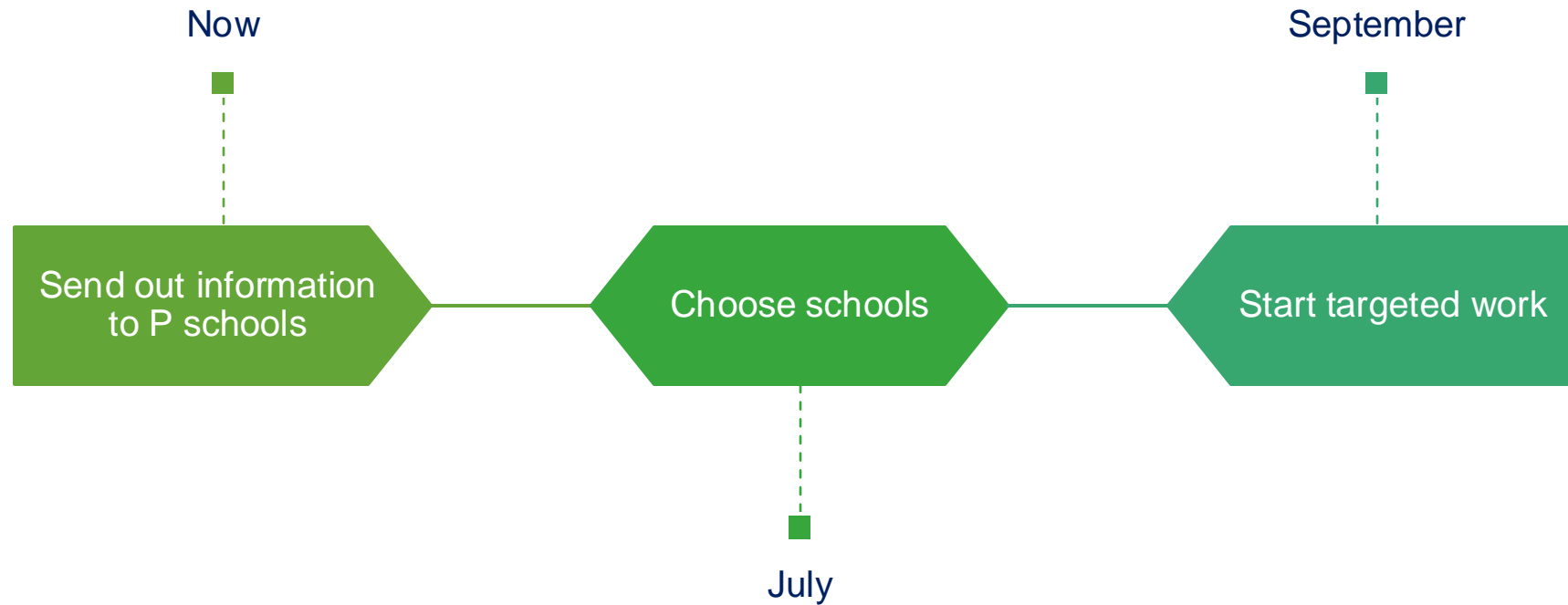
investment in life (self-actualization and orientation toward the future);

efficient problem solving (accurate perception of reality, resistance to stress,  
environmental mastery);

and ability to love, work and play.

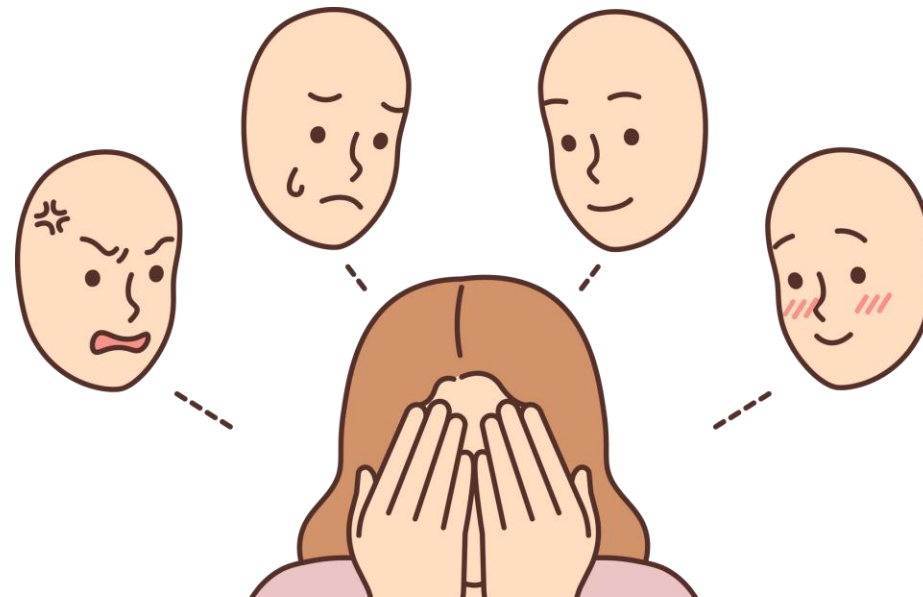


## Phase 1 complete – targeted work starting

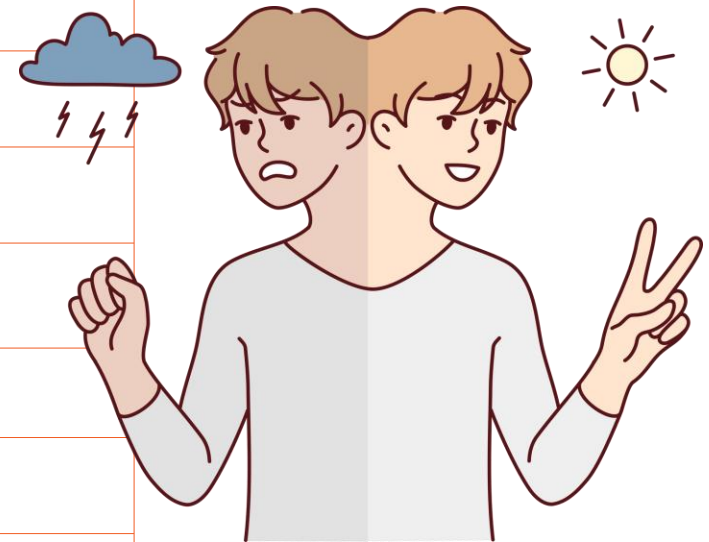


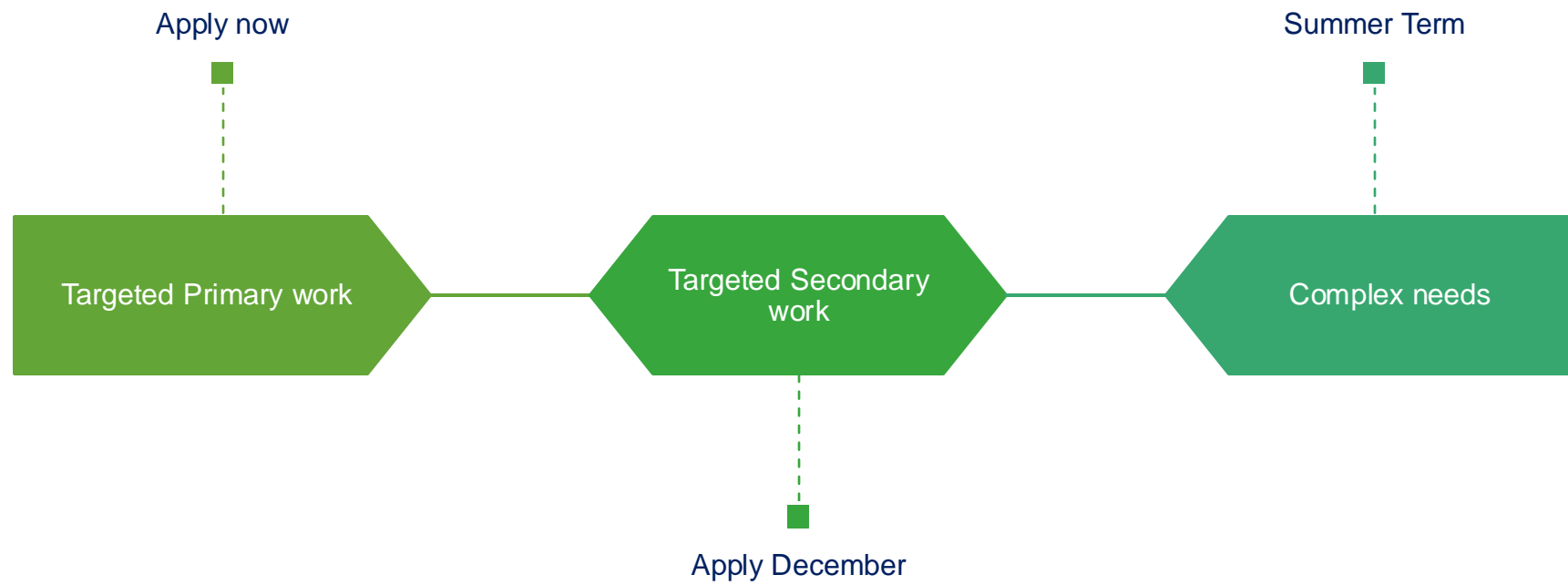
# MY FEELINGS & ME

Supporting children & young people who are  
struggling to attend school



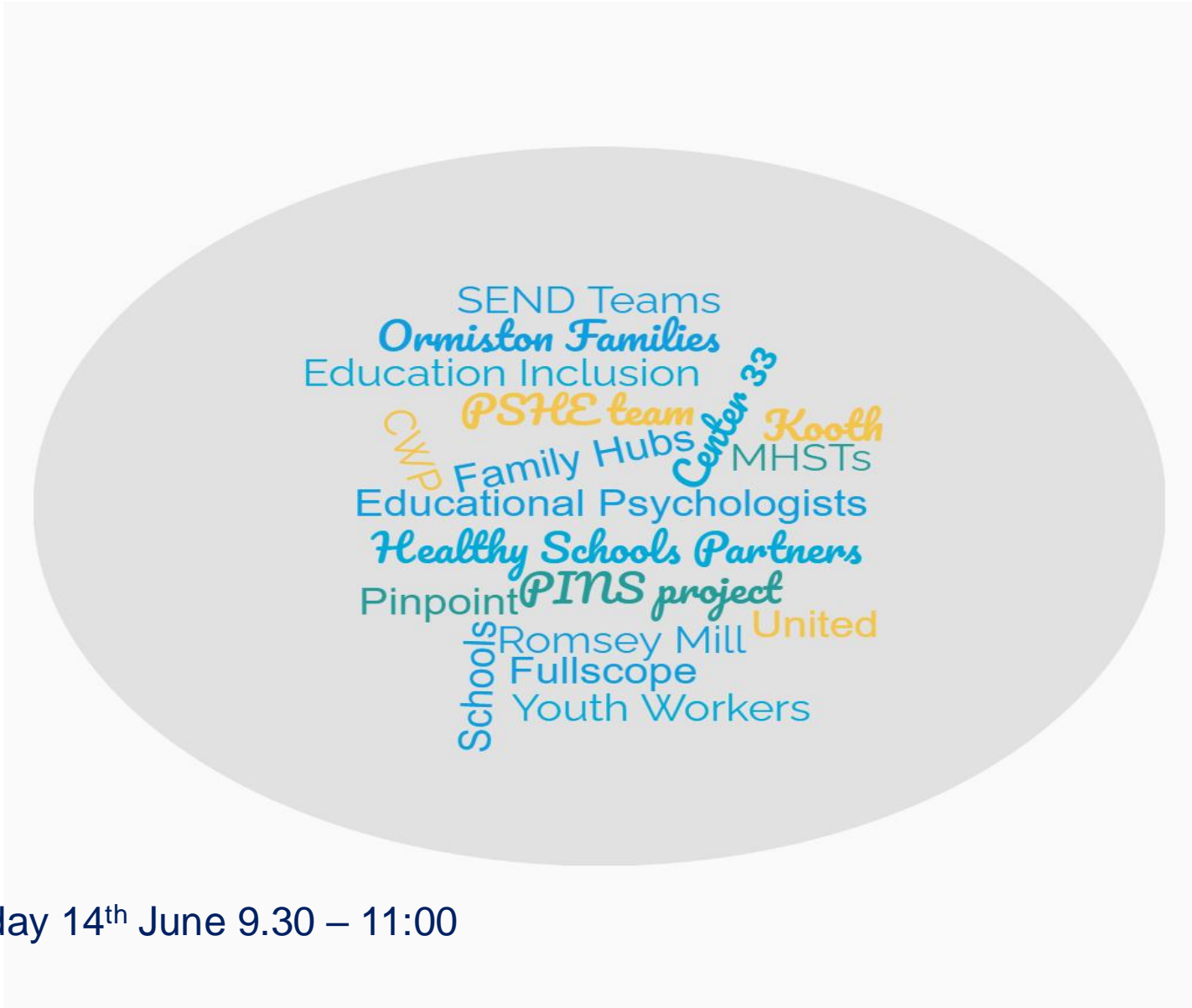
Week	Topic
1	Getting to Know You
2	Goals and Network
3	Understanding Me
4	Our Incredible Brains
5	My Feelings, thoughts and Me
6	Discovering My Early Warning Signs
7	My School Day
8	Reasonable Adjustments
9	Knowing My Strengths
10	Managing Friendships and Building Resilience
11	How To Help Me
12	Putting it all Together – My Toolkit







# Task Force:



First meeting Friday 14<sup>th</sup> June 9.30 – 11:00





*"Support from Nessie is always so well tied in with the way we work at school. In particular the communication from Nessie with both parents and school is excellent and allows the child to progress not just during the sessions but throughout the week too".*