



Re-integrating students struggling with anxiety and self-harm: a checklist

1. Is there a safe space?
2. How do the young people enter the school, can they do so without attention being drawn- are there any potential triggers: staff who may ask questions/ask where they've been/ point them out?
3. Is there a safety plan in place? where to go/useful strategies to use/relaxation techniques (breathing, mindfulness etc.)
4. Is the trusted adult a member of the staff team and is there weekly protected time with them? In a busy school, sometimes sessions are scheduled but they cannot happen, this can break trust further so worth checking.
5. Check ins at the beginning and end of days
6. Reduced timetable and more reduced than you would expect – flexibility in early stages is key to build trust?
7. What are the trigger points (often its arriving with others, class changeovers, lunchtimes, leaving? Creating an alternative timetable can absorb some of these problems.
8. Coping strategies – have they had any training on this? I understand this may have happened as part of the strategies given around their specific anxiety.
9. Mindfulness as a group or individually (Headspace app/Calm/on person)?
10. They will be busy but putting something in that is designed to help them to feel good works – School dog/Equine therapy/Art therapy/Yoga/ General overall wellbeing education around sleep, movement/exercise, enjoyable activities etc.
11. Do you know the increased risk factors among students? These are often hidden other and reaching these students individually in order to get an accurate picture on underlying problems is key. These factors can be school based or at home – key drivers in suicide =

parental divorce/separation, bullying/risk of exclusion or YP who have previously achieved well but are at risk of failing academically – what is their story?

12. A gradual reintegration for those not coming in:

a. For HHTS this might include sessions outside school building – the block can literally be the building itself and entering it, trust is second so building relationships before they can enter school can be key. Meet students as a group or individually at home and then in a public space, take physical school out of the picture to begin with and keep it informal.

b. Giving the young person some autonomy over their initial reintegration, if seen as a joint approach may be much more successful. Use the list above to put requests and expectations in place.

c. Offer students some education around anxiety and returning to school - those initial times in are going to be the toughest but each time they are able to attend their anxiety will hopefully lessen. Also help to reassure and recognise with the young person that if this does not go 'perfectly' this is OK too.