**Children and Young People’s (CYP) Views on EBSA:**

Themes:

1. Struggled with the transition from primary to secondary school:
* CYP found the change in environment overwhelming and anxiety-inducing (due to the scale of pupils, an unfamiliar and larger environment, a variety of teachers/rooms, sensory overload i.e., noise levels, new uniform). Pre-existing sensory difficulties were heightened.

Struggled with change, particularly as they were not prepared for the changes

* They felt ‘unsafe’ and often had physiological responses to the new environment.
* They felt that they weren’t prepared enough i.e., there weren’t enough transition days.
1. Struggled with covid-related changes:
* Covid-19 was often labelled a ‘tipping point’ for EBSA difficulties.
* Online learning didn’t suit all CYP, some ‘loved’ lockdown and others hated it.
* The changes were not prepared for, and change is something these CYP all struggled with.
1. Didn’t feel listened to or supported by school staff:
* CYP had a few school staff that they got on well with, but as a whole felt that staff didn’t understand or support them. They felt that they weren’t listened to or cared for in the way they had been at primary school, which was described as a more nurturing environment.
* They felt that the school staff didn’t like them or labelled/saw them as ‘stubborn’ or ‘rude’, instead of considering that they were struggling.
* Parents also felt unsupported and that communication within school systems was poor.
1. Enjoyed learning but recognised it should be at their own pace:
* CYP explained that it wasn’t the work that they found difficult; they enjoyed learning and enjoyed primary school, but they struggled with the environment and methods of learning. Often alternative ways of learning or any adaptions to teaching were rejected.
* CYP stressed that it is important to look after yourself and remove yourself from a situation that is causing high levels of distress - there is no rush to learning. They felt that they had previously attended school to please others, but in doing so hadn’t put themselves first.