

The Alex Timpson ARC Attachment Award 2021

The Alex Timpson ARC Attachment Award recognises and celebrates best practice in attachment and trauma aware schools and settings

Please provide us with a summary of what the school or setting have done to improve their attachment and trauma awareness. Please describe what was done within the school or setting and any work to share or collaborate with others (MAX 250 WORDS)

Whitefield's Attachment and Trauma Sensitive journey began 5 years ago when they embarked on the Attachment and Trauma Sensitive Schools Award. The Award has rigorous standards and aims to ensure that everyone within the educational environment has a good knowledge of the needs of children and young people who have experienced adversity and of the strategies and resources that are available to meet such needs. It also takes into account the needs of school staff and families.

The school has recently been awarded the Gold Standard of the award which involves consideration of ATSS practice in recruitment and staff support and supervision as well as strengthening and embedding systemic practice with children and is the first mainstream school in Liverpool to do so. This 4 year journey through all stages of the award has involved a whole school training programme which was described by staff as both personally and professionally transformational in the way they view and support children. Senior Leaders identified that vulnerable children need calm consistency from all adults and so ensured that every member of staff regardless of role was part of the training.

Alongside a thorough review of environments and policies and practices to ensure that attachment practice was embedded in school systems and processes, this has shifted the way Whitefield structure and deliver all aspects of school life. For example, a return post pandemic involved development of a trauma focussed recovery programme and also implementation of a whole school play project to support all of our children to regulate, relate and reason on return to school.

<https://whitefieldprimaryschool.co.uk/attachment-and-trauma-sensitive-award/>

Please provide us with a summary of what impact this had on the school or setting. Impact may be described quantitatively - changes in key data over time - or qualitatively using quotations, case studies etc both approaches are valuable (MAX 250 WORDS)

Whitefield was a struggling school with a "satisfactory" Ofsted rating in 2011, moving to "outstanding" in 2017.

Whitefield is in catchment ranked as an area of high deprivation, in the bottom 1% of the most deprived Wards in the country. The school has high levels of Special Educational needs (26.7%), EAL (42%) and deprivation (45% pupil premium) but is successful in removing the barriers that these circumstances might bring. Over the last four years Whitefield have had amongst the highest attainment in Liverpool and has

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been in the top 5% for progress, in all subjects, in the country. Attendance has been in the top 10% nationally for 5 years. The school was ranked as top school in Merseyside and 10th in the country in the Real Schools guide and is top in the country for progress of EAL children. They put the academic success down to the whole school attachment approach. The school has had no permanent exclusions over the last 5 years

Whitefield was the Pearson Silver Award winner for Primary School of the Year 2020 for Making a Difference. This focussed heavily on their ATTS work and the impact on the school community. The award portfolio is here: <https://wke.lt/w/s/o3rAh>

Commentary from attachment Gold report:

“In short, Whitefield Primary School is a trauma-informed and trauma-responsive organisation, which prioritises humanising systems, making them healthier, more relational and interpersonal, more integrated, more reflective, and more interconnected, not only focusing on the pupil population, but by ensuring that trauma-informed knowledge, language, values, principles, assumptions and processes are embedded deep into the culture of the organisation; and are owned and shaped by everyone who is a part, regardless of role”

Please provide us with how the school or setting has or intends to support other partners/agencies/settings to be Attachment Aware (MAX 250 WORDS)

Whitefield have shared their knowledge, strategies and skills across the Local Authority through dialogue and shared training and resources with staff from other schools. They have also worked and shared expertise county- and nationwide in a variety of contexts, through a broad range of organisations and settings.

This has included:

- Developing a partnership with the ADHD Foundation; Jill Wright the school's headteacher has presented on the Witherslack Supporting Senior Leaders Webinar Series on their approach to return to school, focussing on ACES, recovery and play
- Completing the Carnegie/Leeds Beckett Gold Mental Health award and built a professional network through the process, sharing with other schools locally and nationally
- Developing a partnership with Take Ten, which has led to a multiple school project across the school's consortia. Take Ten produce an app to help children and adults understand the physical aspect of self-regulation through biofeedback. Supporting emotional regulation is core to attachment and friendly practice.
- Partnering with Early Excellence as one of a few Regional Hub Schools and have hosted Liverpool's new to eyfs practitioners and also an Early Excellence play twilight training session when again we shared our play based, trauma informed practice and environments in Early Years. Developing close relationships with the Local Authority SEND officer, Virtual School, Social Inclusion team, Educational Psychologists and other professionals. When working with children they seek to provide a holistic view of their profile, highlighting early challenges which may impact development to ensure their needs are viewed through a trauma informed lens

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The Attachment Research Community



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