



Attachment and Trauma Sensitive Schools Award (ATSSA)

A framework of support and understanding for schools and other educational establishments within which children and young people who have experienced adversity, can heal, thrive, play, and learn.

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Jill Wright and Marie Beale
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27th September 2023

Dear Jill and Marie,

Thank you for applying for renewal of the Attachment and Trauma Sensitive Schools Award (ATSSA) at Gold Level, and for providing comprehensive evidence in support of your application. Thanks also for inviting me to conduct the verification visit for the Award. I should like to extend my thanks to you for making the visit so purposeful and enjoyable. It was an absolute delight to see your wonderful school and its staff and children.

I should like to warmly congratulate you and your staff on achieving the Award, which is an external sign of recognition of your commitment to the steps you have taken at Whitefield Primary School to develop a culture of compassion and nurture, and to become a truly attachment- and trauma-responsive setting. The Award is valid for two years and will run from September 2023 to September 2025, at which point you will be invited to renew your accreditation.

You have maintained very high levels of strategy and practice at both Bronze and Silver Levels. All six criteria at Gold level have been evidenced to an exceptional level. The evidence you have submitted comes from a variety of sources: case studies; extracts and examples of key documents and policies provided by you; from interviews with you and other staff members, and the walk through the whole school which I so enjoyed today. The evidence folders were completed to a very high standard and you provided me with much

evidence to further support my own data gathered today and previously, and this has added depth and context to the evidence folders.

Staff at Whitefield Primary School have developed strategy and practice which is grounded in the understanding that trauma can impact an individual's neurological, biological, psychological, emotional and social development, and this understanding is not limited to the students but to the entire population of the school, including staff and families. The key questions asked by staff are related to what each individual needs and what has happened to them, rather than what is wrong with them.

It would be impossible to communicate adequately in this letter the breadth and richness of your practice. 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 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.

I shall be most interested to hear about the progress of your exciting Key Stage 3 project and development in EYFS. I look forward to continuing to support you going forward.

I hope that you will share your achievement with pupils, staff, families, governors and other stakeholders to celebrate the school's commitment to its children and whole community, successfully removing barriers to learning and participation in the life of the school. I have felt particularly privileged to share your journey and am delighted to renew the Gold Award. Tony and Bridie add their congratulations to mine.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Jennifer A Nock, CPsychol, AFBPsS, PhD, BSc (Hons)

Bridie White LLB MA