

Attachment and Trauma - An Introduction for Schools

Educational Psychology Service



Attachment and Trauma

Why is it important to think about attachment and trauma in schools?

Professionals who work with children and young people are increasingly being asked to understand the impact of early life experiences and trauma on children's development. This is because it is now understood that children with unmet attachment needs and/or adverse childhood experiences (including trauma) can emotionally be in a place where they are unable to engage or relate at the most basic levels. These are the children who often struggle to access learning or social situations and who can be at risk of not being engaged in education, employment or training

How can schools help?

By developing attachment-aware and trauma informed knowledge, skills and practices adults are better able to mitigate the impacts. Giving children and young people the right tools and support will help them to experience positive experiences in life. This will lead to better educational and life outcomes. Good practitioners understand that how they are, is as important as what they know, say or do.

Relationships are central to practice.

It might be helpful to consider some of these key questions?

Are we aware of students with attachment or developmental trauma and their individual strengths and needs?

Has a key adult or team of adults been identified to support these student(s)?

What relational approaches are already in place at school? Do our policies and procedures (particularly behaviour management) meet the needs of children affected by attachment / developmental trauma? Are we tuned into the emotional needs of all students, understanding any triggers for dysregulation and how we help them to regulate their emotions?

In depth

Attachment allows children to develop a secure base from which they can explore the world. Attachment to caregivers lays the foundations for social and emotional well-being and the capacity to learn and develop.

When children do not have their attachment needs met they suffer unregulated stress and do not develop stress regulation. This affects the child's ability to form relationships and to learn.

Developmental trauma is a term frequently used to describe the effects of prolonged or repeated experiences of trauma in childhood. This impacts a child/young person's social, emotional and/or cognitive development.





How can current strategies be adapted to support students to feel safer and more secure in school?

Are staff confident to meet the needs of children with attachment or developmental trauma? What can we do to support staff's understanding and skills in meeting their needs?

Where can I get more information, advice and support?

For a telephone consultation about a Manchester Looked After CYP, please email:

LACEP@oneeducation.co.uk

One Education have produced an Inclusion Toolkit as part of the Inclusion Strategy which promotes educational inclusion and support for all children and young people to thrive.

Section 1: sets out Manchester's vision and guiding principles.

Section 2: sets out key approaches to good universal inclusive practice.

Section 3: provides a 'quick links' information access approach to help all those working to support children and young people to find information about specific educational needs, evidence-based approaches/interventions and links to useful resources and supporting agencies/services.

It includes a section on attachment and developmental trauma.

Where can I find the Inclusion Toolkit?

www.oneeducation.co.uk/inclusiontoolkit

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It is important that every child and young person in our early years' settings, schools and Post 16 provisions, whatever their circumstance or ability, has a sense of belonging, feel respected and is valued for who they are.

Manchester
City Council





Manchester Inclusion
Strategy Toolkit

Where can I find the Inclusion Toolkit?

The Inclusion Toolkit has been shared with all Manchester Local Authority Schools. This is now available on the One Education website.

oneeducation.co.uk/inclusiontoolkit

For further information, please email:
inclusionstrategytoolkit@oneeducation.co.uk

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✉: inclusionstrategytoolkit@oneeducation.co.uk

🌐: oneeducation.co.uk/inclusiontoolkit

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