

The Alex Timpson Attachment and Trauma Programme in Schools Newsletter March 2018

The Alex Timpson Attachment and Trauma Programme in Schools aims to address the emotional, mental health and well-being needs of all children and build a new evidence base about how young people benefit from a whole school approach to meeting these needs.

This termly newsletter will provide updates and support to schools and local authorities nationally, both those participating in the Programme and those who are interested in it. As the Programme develops, please contact us with news from your school and suggestions for content.

Background

Sir John Timpson and his late wife Alex fostered nearly 90 children and adopted two but it was a long time before anyone explained to them the effects of early trauma and neglect in terms of attachment issues. This enabled Alex and John to understand the children's behavior so much better that John has become a passionate advocate of improving the understanding of attachment and trauma.

Young people who have experienced trauma and/or neglect often have difficulties engaging in learning and have much poorer outcomes which affect their subsequent life chances (housing, employment, criminal activity, health). Our previous research on educational progress shows that teachers lack confidence in dealing with the effects of trauma and neglect on young people in schools.

We have found that where whole school staff development takes place, young people in some schools benefit from a calmer atmosphere, having an adult that they trust to turn to for support and safe spaces in schools where they can go to calm down. Staff become more confident at getting behind the behavior to help the child self-regulate.

[Read more](#)

The Alex Timpson Attachment and Trauma Programme in Schools is a research programme taking place in primary, secondary and special schools across England. It aims to increase staff awareness of the role of trauma and attachment in schools, improve the quality of relationships and hence the experience of all children and young people. [The Rees Centre](#) at the University of Oxford is evaluating the impact of schools being 'attachment aware' in order to demonstrate that schools addressing these needs early can make a difference to young people's emotional, social, mental health and well-being.

[Programme website](#)

“Becoming an attachment aware school has had one of the greatest impacts on developing positive pupil and staff relationships, more than any other initiative or policy we have trialled in the past. It has helped to reduce anxieties, not just for some of our most vulnerable pupils, but for the mental health and wellbeing of all within the school. Staff have found that child behaviours are more easily understood and strategies used within the school have reduced incidences of poor behaviour. The school has a tangible sense of 'feeling good', where children's emotional welfare is supported as much as their academic need, and all in the school acknowledge and respect the fact that anyone can feel vulnerable, or need support, at any time. The message at my school is that it's ok not to feel ok, and that we're all here to help you to feel better.”

John Snell, Head Teacher, Welton Primary School Radstock

Over the next four and a half years, at least 300 schools across England will be involved in the Programme. Their Virtual School will support training selected by them but meeting common criteria on the experience of the trainers and areas covered.

If your school is interested in joining the Alex Timpson Programme, please contact your Virtual School Head.

Rees Centre Webinar: How do schools address attachment and trauma?

Monday 26 March 2018 at 4pm

This online webinar will look at ways that schools can use findings from research around attachment awareness to inform their practice.

Head Teacher of Maple Cross JMI & Nursery School in Hertfordshire, **Duncan Roberts**, has been leading work in his school on attachment and trauma for several years. He will describe why his school undertook work on attachment, what they did, what the outcomes have been, what challenges they faced and how they overcame these.

[More information on this event](#)

[Join the webinar](#)

Further Information

Website: [The Alex Timpson Attachment and Trauma Programme in Schools](#)

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