

Becoming Trauma- Informed

Network for Church of England Schools

September 2022 – July 2023



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND
EDUCATION OFFICE

FOUNDATION FOR
EDUCATIONAL
LEADERSHIP



WHY DO WE WANT TO SEE SCHOOLS BECOMING TRAUMA-INFORMED?

At the Church of England Foundation for Educational Leadership (CEFEL), we believe that ‘leaders in education are called to pursue social justice and wellbeing of all, showing love for the disadvantaged, marginalised and vulnerable’.¹ Indeed, church schools were set up originally for this very purpose back in 1811! Over the last two years, the impact of trauma on our children and young people has been highlighted as never before – bringing into focus the critical need for schools to be informed about the sorts of trauma that impede children from accessing learning and flourishing in their lives. For some children, trauma has resulted from their earliest childhood experiences, for others it may be a one-off traumatic incident; we also know that for a large number of children, the challenges of COVID19 have heavily impacted upon their wellbeing, through isolation, instability and/or bereavement. We have a vision to support schools in:

- demonstrating **WISDOM** by upskilling staff with the evidence-informed knowledge to support these children as best they can (and signposting further in-depth training)
- building **COMMUNITIES** that collaborate to ensure flourishing for all – particularly the most vulnerable – through networking school leaders together
- seeing the innate **DIGNITY** in each and every child, thus seeking to understand them as best we can and prioritising their needs within our schools

¹ David Ford & Andy Wolfe *Called, Connected, Committed* (2020)

² Church of England Vision for Education *Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good* (2016)

WHAT IS THE FEEDBACK ABOUT THE PILOT COHORT?

We commissioned an academic study of our first cohort, with an interim report published in February 2022 (please see appendix attached). The report found:

‘The network model can be seen to provide an action-oriented, affirmative and reflexive space where there is a strong focus on collaborative learning... Early evidence suggests that some participants are already taking their learning back into their school contexts with actions identified in the network sessions.’

Dr Louise Gazeley, University of Sussex, Interim Evaluation Study

Professor McCrory from UCL, who helped set up the network said:

‘Childhood trauma is the largest modifiable risk factor for psychological and mental health difficulties and can significantly compromise a child’s educational engagement and attainment. I have been greatly impressed by the Becoming Trauma Informed Network pilot which has adopted a flexible network model, encompassing expert academics and practitioners alongside facilitated discussion sessions. The approach has permitted the delivery of the latest research and understanding in the field of trauma to a wide audience and provided a platform for school leaders to reflect on current practice and potential areas for change. In my view this unique model has significant potential to be replicated and expanded to drive systemic improvement and innovation in children’s wellbeing, educational engagement and attainment.’

Professor Eamon McCrory – UCL/ Anna Freud Centre/ Royal Foundation

A key aim of this network moving forward is to make contributions to, and draw upon, research being done within a UK context about the approaches which best support children who have experienced trauma within a school context.

WHAT WILL THE NETWORK INVOLVE?

Drawing on expertise (both from academics and practitioners) from across the field of trauma-informed practice, CEFEL’s track record of leadership development across its 4,700 schools and a successful pilot in 2021-22, we are once again offering this network to partners across the country. It is aimed at trust and school leaders, Designated Leads for Safeguarding and Looked After Children, Chaplains, SENDCos and teachers who want to know how to make their school more attuned to the needs of children and young people who have experienced trauma. We run these networks through local Dioceses, Trusts and Delivery Partners, as well as leading a national network for secondary schools.

The structure of the network is:

- **Expert teaching** from foremost professionals in the field (we have heard from Professor Eamon McCrory - UCL/ Anna Freud, David Trickey - UK Trauma Council and Christine Davies - Trauma Informed Schools during 2021-22) which is available to everyone in the network via Zoom
- **Local networking** for school leaders to come together with others in their area and unpack what this teaching means for their pupils in their context. This is led by local facilitators (from the diocese, MAT or DP), who take part in national training provided by CEFEL, with dates that are locally set.

This network is not a course and does not replace the depth of knowledge and understanding that can be gained through expert training. It is an opportunity to engage in discussion, raise awareness and identify areas for development and gaps in knowledge. One of the key benefits of this network is connecting schools with organisations who *do* have expertise in this field and can offer their own programmes, resources and materials which schools can access to deepen their knowledge of these topics in much greater depth.

Year 1

Session	Date (all 4-5pm)	Topic	National/Regional
OPEN WEBINAR	5 th October 2022	The Evidence Base for Trauma-Informed Practice Here from Dr Janet Rose about what the research tells us about the impact trauma-informed practice has on children and young people. This session is open to any school interested in this topic, not just those in the network.	Janet Rose, Attachment Research Community
Network Input Session 1 (virtual):	2 nd November 2022	What is trauma? What does it mean to be 'trauma-informed'? Different types of trauma children may experience, including single event, chronic and adverse childhood experiences (ACEs). Understanding how a trauma-informed approach can support different children within our schools.	Christine Davies, Trauma Informed Schools
Input Session 2 (virtual):	23 rd November 2022	Practical Strategies: Part 1 Overcoming barriers to learning - practical classroom strategies to support children whose physical, cognitive, and social and emotional development has been adversely impacted by traumatic early life experiences.	Rebecca Brooks, Adoption UK
Local Network Session 1:	During December 2022	What is trauma? / Overcoming barriers to learning Unpacking the national inputs locally	Led locally
Input session 3 (virtual):	18 th January 2023	Bereavement and Loss How can we support children and young people who have experienced bereavement and the impact of grief and loss?	David Trickey, UK Trauma Council
Local Network session 3:	During February 2023	Bereavement and Loss Unpacking the national input locally	Led Locally
Input session 4 (virtual):	8 th March 2022	Practical Strategies: Part 2 How can we support children and young people to make sense of their emotions, so that they are able to engage meaningfully in school life?	Rae Morfin, TLG
Local Network session 4:	During March 2023	How can we support children and young people to make sense of their emotions? Unpacking the national input locally	Led Locally
Input session 5 (virtual):	3 rd May 2023	Neuroscience – how does trauma affect children’s brains and what can we learn from this?	Eamon McCrory, UCL/ Anna Freud
Local Network session 5:	During May 2023	Neuroscience Unpacking the national input locally	Led Locally
Input session 6 (virtual):	21 st June 2023	Practical Strategies: Part 3 Supporting social functioning and relationships, leading to more positive interactions and behaviour in school; how understanding trauma can help link more constructively with home and families.	Shawn Brown, The Difference

Local Network session 6:	During July 2023	Supporting social functioning and relationships Unpacking the national input locally Celebration and review of learning	Led locally
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Intended Learning Outcomes:

- An improved understanding of what trauma is, and how it impacts children/ young people in a range of different ways
- Increased understanding of the difference between single event trauma and long-term sustained trauma (e.g. as experienced by looked after children) and how that might present in our students at school
- For school or trust leaders, to be taking steps to embed a trauma-informed culture across a whole school or trust
- For practitioners, to be utilising a range of strategies to recognise and support children who have experienced/ are experiencing trauma
- Evaluated and reviewed policies and procedures for managing behaviour; identified and implemented actions to impact positively upon student wellbeing and outcomes
- School leaders feeling equipped to obtain appropriate external advice and support from a range of agencies and organisations (including those signposted by the network)

Ultimately, we want to see those children and young people in our schools who have experienced some form of trauma, to be more able to access their learning because they are understood, supported and nurtured to thrive.

This is dependent on schools who are led and staffed by adults who demonstrate particular mindsets and therefore behaviours. Therefore, our network principles, which we are seeking to develop in participants (with the intention of effecting long-term change) are:

- A willingness to learn and admit any gaps in knowledge
- The courage to seek help and make difficult decisions
- Empathetic listening which seeks to understand
- Open-mindedness to different approaches and ideas
- Non-judgemental engagement with others
- Commitment to action in service of children/ young people

Each network session will build on the learning from the expert instruction. There will be an expectation that participants will engage with that learning, considering how to apply it to their own context. Key questions will encourage participants to try out/ explore a particular activity or strategy in their own school and report back at the next network session.



ROLE OF DIOCESE/ MAT/ DELIVERY PARTNER:

Each host diocese/ MAT/ DP will need to provide a *facilitator* for the network who will engage with the taught sessions, CEFEL training and lead discussions locally on the materials. The time commitment for this is around 1 hour per month, plus preparation time.

CEFEL will provide:

- All taught sessions by trauma experts (on Zoom)
- Training and ongoing support for facilitators
- Materials for facilitators to use in their network groups, including suggested reading and key questions to reflect on practice
- An online resource area with access to taught sessions, additional reading and signposting further training and expertise

Cost of the Network for 2022-23:

In 2021-22 we were able to offer this network to several local hosts without charge due to a generous donation from The Timpson Foundation. We are currently seeking external funding for this network and may in the future be able to offer bursaries to organisations who would not be able to run the network otherwise.

The cost of the Network for 2022-23 is:

Price:	Price per school (If 10 schools in Network)	Price per school (If 20 schools in Network)
£200/ individual school	£75	£37.50
£750 per local network group	£25	£12.50
(Cohort 1: £250 2nd year)	£95	£47.50
£995 if combined with SEND network		

Please note that all prices are exclusive of VAT.

CEFEL will also host and lead a national secondary network group, with up to 20 secondary schools.

Contact Emily.Norman@churchofengland.org for more details or to sign up.