

TRAUMA
INFORMED **UK**TM
SCHOOLS



TRAUMA INFORMED IS NOT WHAT WE DO, IT'S WHO WE ARE

Our approach at St Anthony's is centred around building positive relationships and nurturing environments which support children to become safe, seen, soothed and secure.

We want to use the opportunity of everyday interactions with children to build positive pathways in the brain; to give children the skills to become emotionally regulated, solve problems and develop a positive sense of self.

To achieve this, we use a three pronged approach:

We use our understanding of child development and the brain through the *neurosequential model* and *sensory systems* to help us to give meaning to the child's behaviour or response.

We consider the *context* of the individual before their actions.

We then use a *therapeutic approach* to respond to that child in a way which shows acceptance.



A Trauma-Informed Approach

St Anthony's is committed to developing a Trauma and Mental Health Informed Approach which will protect our academy community members – staff, children and parents.

There is a growing body of research on the impact childhood adversity has on long-term mental and physical health. To ensure every child develops positive mental health and resilience, our aim is to:

- support children to make sense of their experience(s)
- find ways to manage their emotions and feelings
- create an environment of safety, connection and compassion at all times
- build a academy/Trust network of strong, positive, supportive relationships through training
- ensure children maintain the capacity to learn, despite difficult events that may occur

We do not operate a 'zero tolerance' or 'one size fits all' approach to distressed behaviour. We have high expectations of behaviour for all, however rigorous support is offered to those having difficulty meeting those expectations.

**Our Trauma Informed approach is based around the key principles of
Protect, Relate, Regulate and Reflect.**



Our approach is a way of being. It is how we interact and build meaningful and nurturing relationships with the children.

PACE

P.A.C.E (Dan Hughes) is a way of thinking, feeling, communicating and behaving that aims to make the child feel safe. It is based upon how parents connect with their very young infants. As with young toddlers, with safety the child can begin to explore and feel secure in themselves.

P - Playfulness - When appropriate, approaching interactions with playfulness shows children that

A - Acceptance - We accept the child at all times but not always the behaviour

C - Curiosity - We show curiosity and wonder why incidents or dysregulation might occur

E - Empathy - Having empathy allows us to connect with the child and attune to their needs

More information about PACE can be found [here](#).



Protect



- Bringing about a culture of warmth and social engagement
- Promote and value the development of the whole child
- Staff trained in empathic and playful modes of interaction (attending specifically to their use of language and voice)

On the gate

- All children are greeted in the morning on the gate by an emotionally available adult.
- Children are welcomed into school and their attendance is appreciated and celebrated. Our aim is that all children feel 'seen' and that they are key part of the school community.

In the Classroom

- Each child is greeted by their name by their class teacher. Immediately setting up the classroom as a warm and safe environment where they can learn and make mistakes.
- Delight in each child- aim of activating pro social systems and reducing stress
- Daily timetable on the board each morning
- Introduction of check in system to identify any issues and address promptly.



Relate



As human beings we are wired for relationship.

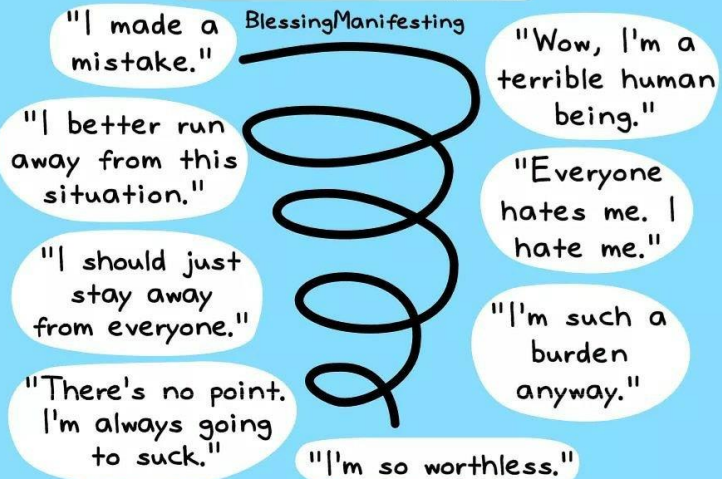
The ability to form meaningful relationships is fundamental to mental health and happiness. We can only truly develop ourselves through relationships with others.

Positive relational experiences with our children means meeting the child in pain and meeting the child in joy.

A whole-school commitment to enabling children to see themselves, their relationships and the world positively, rather than through a lens of threat, danger or self-blame.

Vulnerable children provided with repeated relational opportunities (with emotionally available adults) to make the shift from 'blocked trust' (not feeling psychologically safe with anyone) to trust, and from self-help to 'help seeking'.

The Shame Spiral



Know that everyone makes mistakes and most of them are fixable. You are human.

Instead of focusing on the shame, focus on the solutions moving forward. It's a learning experience.

Use affirmations and practice self-compassion. "It's okay to make mistakes. I'm allowed to be upset."

Talk (or write) about your feelings. Find a positive outlet for those emotions.

Relate



“He hadn't had a good lunch time and was not in a good place. We took our time and he helped me to set up for the session. He managed to regulate himself to be within the group. He saw that the other children were attempting climbing a tree. He tried so many times. Usually, he would have given up ages ago. And he does not like an audience. You could tell he felt comfortable with us watching today and encouraging him. He didn't expect to be able to do it. He was so proud of himself.”

Practitioner Feedback



Through our Forest School provision we are able to allow children to experience new environments, face challenges outside of the classroom and feel empowered by their new skills.



Teacher Evaluations (Skills Identification Assessment)

Group	Areas of Focus	Pre Assessment %	Post Assessment %	Impact %	Average % Impact across all areas
[]	Well-being	77.3	83.3	6↑	9↑
	Social	72.59	83.3	10.71↑	
	Emotions	59.7	75	15.3↑	
	Behaviour	72.9	77.03	4.13↑	
[]	Well-being	65.82	74.1	8.28↑	19.17↑
	Social	70	75	5↑	
	Emotions	31.6	65	33.4↑	
	Behaviour	45	75	30↑	
[]	Well-being	50	70.8	20.5↑	16.85↑
	Social	75	75	-	
	Emotions	25	50	25↑	
	Behaviour	28.1	50	21.9↑	
[]	Well-being	75	100	25↑	30.2↑
	Social	75	100	25↑	
	Emotions	29.1	75	45.9↑	
	Behaviour	50	75	25↑	



Parent Feedback

“He counts down the days to forest school. I struggle getting him in to school but on Tuesdays, there is no struggle- he always seems happier on Tuesdays. He absolutely loves forest school”

Child B made a ‘welly remover’. She was then able to teach the younger children how to use it.

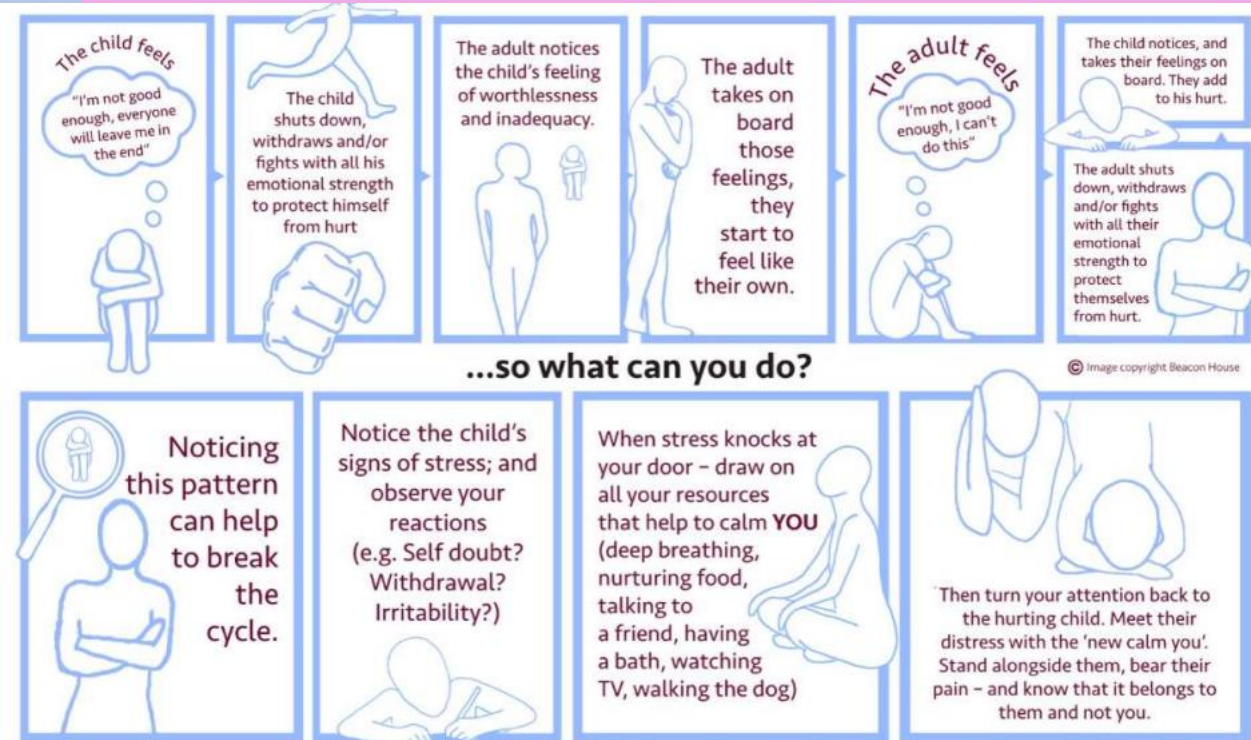


There are 4 key principles to support a child to regulate their feelings and behaviour.

1. Stay with the child
2. Listen to the child
3. Affect labelling – this simply means help the child to find words to describe their feelings
4. Mental state talk – When they have big feelings, talk them through it. An example of this is: instead of just putting a screaming toddler in the pushchair and ignore them or shout at them. Place them in the pushchair whilst using mental state talk with affect attunement (this means using their voice to match the energy, not the emotion in the child's distress. *'Mummy knows you don't want to get in the pushchair. You cross about it. You cross with mummy. No pushchair. Mummy knows you were so enjoying playing with your ball in the sand.'*

By using the above strategies the child will feel understood which will help to bring down their stress levels and help them feel socially connected. They will be better able to learn, to use life well, to concentrate, to enjoy relationships and to be kind to others.

Regulate





Regulate



School is for learning

If learning is giving you big uncomfortable feelings you can have 5 minutes in the calm space.

5

You can pick an activity.

I will come and talk with you and we will make a plan!

You can do this.

Your emotions are feeling big.

We cannot be unsafe in the classroom but we can get back to calm on our table.

You can pick an activity.

I will come and talk with you.

You are safe.

In school we are introducing calm mats that mirror the word mats used in lessons so that children who have become dysregulated are able to learn to self soothe. We are also using visual social stories to enable children to access calm spaces before an emotionally available adult is able to have a restorative conversation.

Reflecting is about having conversations with a child that support their emotional and mental health. It facilitates the child to make sense of their life, to develop a language for their emotions and a coherent narrative that makes sense of what they feel. It supports them to understand their thoughts, feelings, bodily sensations and reactions. In making sense of their experience with the support of an emotionally available adult, who helps them communicate their underlying feelings, they can identify new options and strategies for ways forward with both their hopes and their difficulties.

Reflect



A shift from traditional language to a trauma-informed description of vulnerable individuals can create...

...compassion instead of blame: hope instead of hopelessness and connection rather than disconnection.

WINE Sentence Stems

I wonder if.... (it felt like no one understood you)
I imagine.... (that was horrible when it happened)
I notice.... (you perked up when you said...)
I felt moved when you said...
That sounds...
I respect you for...
Will you help me understand X ?
*Always follow up with **empathy!***



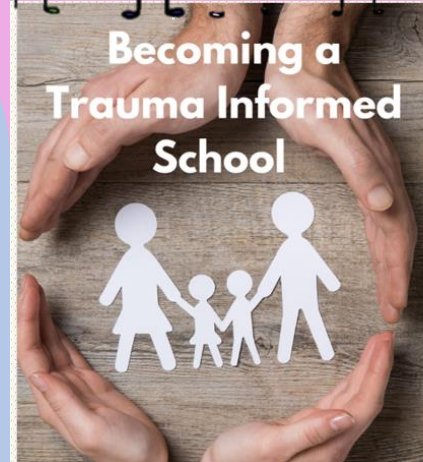
Staff Meetings and Training

Trauma Informed Schools is an organisation committed to improving the health and wellbeing and ability to learn of the most vulnerable schoolchildren in the UK, namely those who have suffered trauma, abuse, neglect and/or have mental health problems or attachment issues. It aims to provide appropriate training for schools, communities and organisations so that they become trauma informed and mentally healthy places for all. Mrs Tipney, Miss Weare and Mrs Thulbourn are all *Trauma Informed Schools Accredited Practitioners* and they have delivered a range of training to all staff. Including -

- An introduction to the Neuroscience and links to Trauma
- Introducing emotionally available adults
- Provide new strategies to build relationships with all children
- Principles of PROTECT, RELATE, REGULATE and REFLECT
- Language and connection
- Therapeutic practice
- Recognising when we are dysregulated



Becoming a
Trauma Informed
School



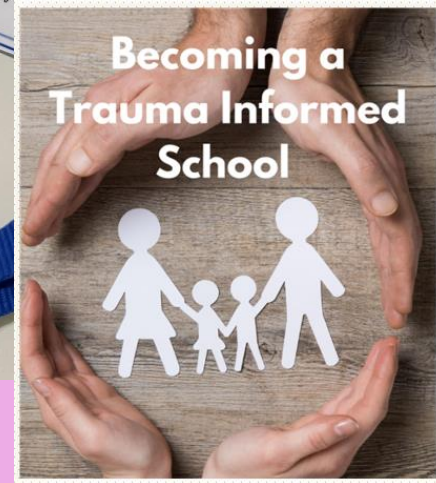
An introduction to
Trauma Informed
Schools,
PACE and Relationship
Policies.



THE STRESS RESPONSE IN KIDS		
FIGHT	FLIGHT	FREEZE
Yelling, Screaming, Using Mean Words	Wanting to Escape, Running Away	Shutting Down, Mind Goes Blank
Hitting, Kicking, Biting, Throwing, Punching	Unfocused, Hard to Pay Attention	Urge to Hide, Isolates Self
Blaming, Deflecting, Responsibility, Defensive	Fidgeting, Restlessness, Hyperactive	Verbally Unresponsive, Says, 'I don't know' a lot
Demanding, Controlling	Preoccupied, Busy with Everything But the Thing	Difficulty with Completing Tasks
'Oppositional', 'Defiant', 'Noncompliant'	Procrastinating, Avoidant, Ignores the Situation	Zoned Out, Daydreaming
Moving Towards What Feels Threatening	Moving Away From What Feels Threatening	Unable to Move, Feeling Stuck
Irritable, Angry, Furious, Offended, Aggressive	Anxious, Panicked, Scared, Worried, Overwhelmed	Depressed, Numb, Bored/Apathetic, Helpless



Becoming a
Trauma Informed
School



Trauma informed
language,
interventions,
and
therapeutic practice



In the Classroom



- Helping children to be neurochemically literate
- Understanding how we can optimally activate chemicals
- Teaching children the importance of mental and physical wellbeing
- Connection and interaction and the importance of reaching out

All classes from in KS1 and KS2 have a class *Worry Monster* in their classroom.

The *Worry Monsters* allow children to share thoughts and feelings they are experiencing in a less overwhelming and private way. The *Worry Monsters* are checked daily and allow children to have restorative and supportive conversations with staff at school.



Dopamine

- Being kind to others AND yourself
- Getting plenty of sleep
- Going on a run or walk with family or friends
- Listening to music

Endorphins

- Spending time outdoors
- Meditating or practicing mindfulness
- Laughing
- Exercising
- Talking about something you love with a friend

Serotonin

- Doing kind acts for others
- Eating a well-balanced diet
- Sunshine
- Spending quality time with friends and family

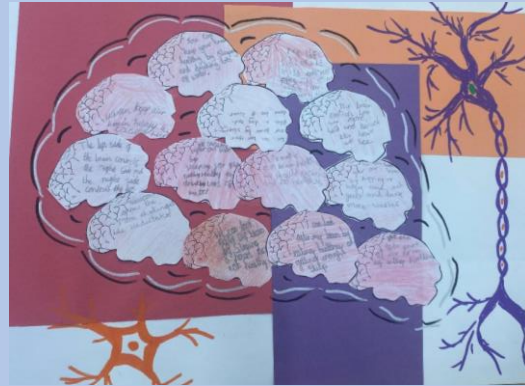
PSHE- Incorporating key themes and broadening Learning

Fight, Flight, Freeze



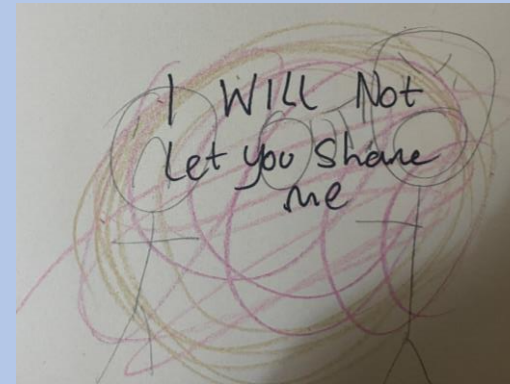
- What is going on in my body?
- Why is this happening?
- Understanding of the amygdala
- Recognising the impact of our feelings on our body

Neuroplasticity

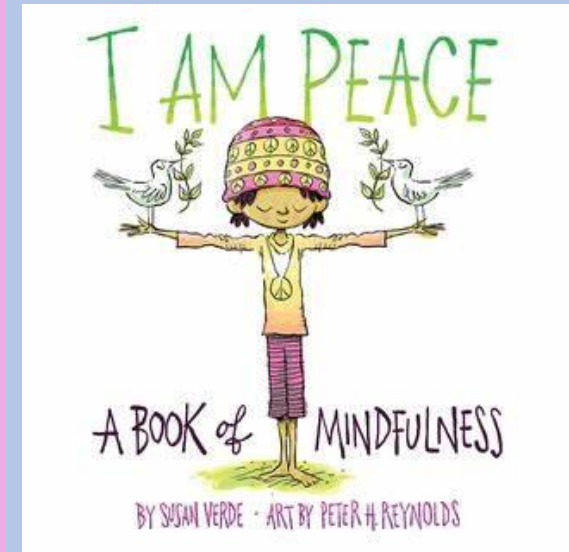


- Delving deeper into how our brains actually work and using scientific terminology
- Children able to reflect on their own learning, behaviour patterns
- It's not my fault..





Shame



- Equipping children with the language to defend themselves against shame
- "When you do/say this it makes me feel this could you....."
- Modelling of how to fend off shaming



KEY WORDS

- Angry  A big, high energy, uncomfortable feeling
- Pre-frontal cortex  Part of our brain in charge of big thinking
- Amygdala  Part of our brain in charge of keeping us safe
- Regulation  The process of getting back to calm



Resources for Parents -

<https://www.annafreud.org/parents-and-carers/resources/>

<https://www.elsa-support.co.uk/bereavement-resources-for-parents-and-school-staff/>

<https://www.youngminds.org.uk/parent/how-to-talk-to-your-child-about-mental-health/>

Resources for Children -

Emotional Literacy – EYFS

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KivttwaXQZ4>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0076ZF4jg3o>

Emotional Literacy - KS1

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=akTRWJZMks0>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UmrUV8v-KQg>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4yaGLes18Ls>

Understanding our Brains - KS2

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3bKuoH8CkFc>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dknTQktH5Z0>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YpIXQW8rhws>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RqoU-m8kaw>

Mindfulness

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SmBFxzTihXE>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xLoK5rOl8Qk>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1us7DmXAuaU>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DCgnnYclQ3s>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rC0m-HQcRU>