Islington TIPPS

Trauma informed PRU, primary schools and partners project

Whittington Health **NHS** | **NHS** Islington **Clinical Commissioning Group** | ISLINGTON

Trauma

Trauma is not the event itself, but rather a response to a highly stressful experience in which a person's ability to cope is dramatically undermined.

The range of potentially traumatic events in childhood is quite broad, including not only physical threat and harm but also emotional maltreatment, neglect, abandonment, and devastating loss

Trauma is common

The three types of ACEs include

ABUSE

Physical

Emotional

Sexual

NEGLECT

Physical

Emotional

HOUSEHOLD DYSFUNCTION

Mental Illness

Incarcerated Relative

Mother treated violently
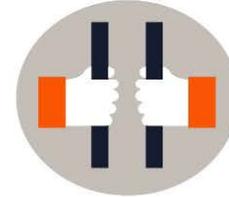
Substance Abuse

Divorce

Key factors identified in 2800 social care assessments in 2013/14
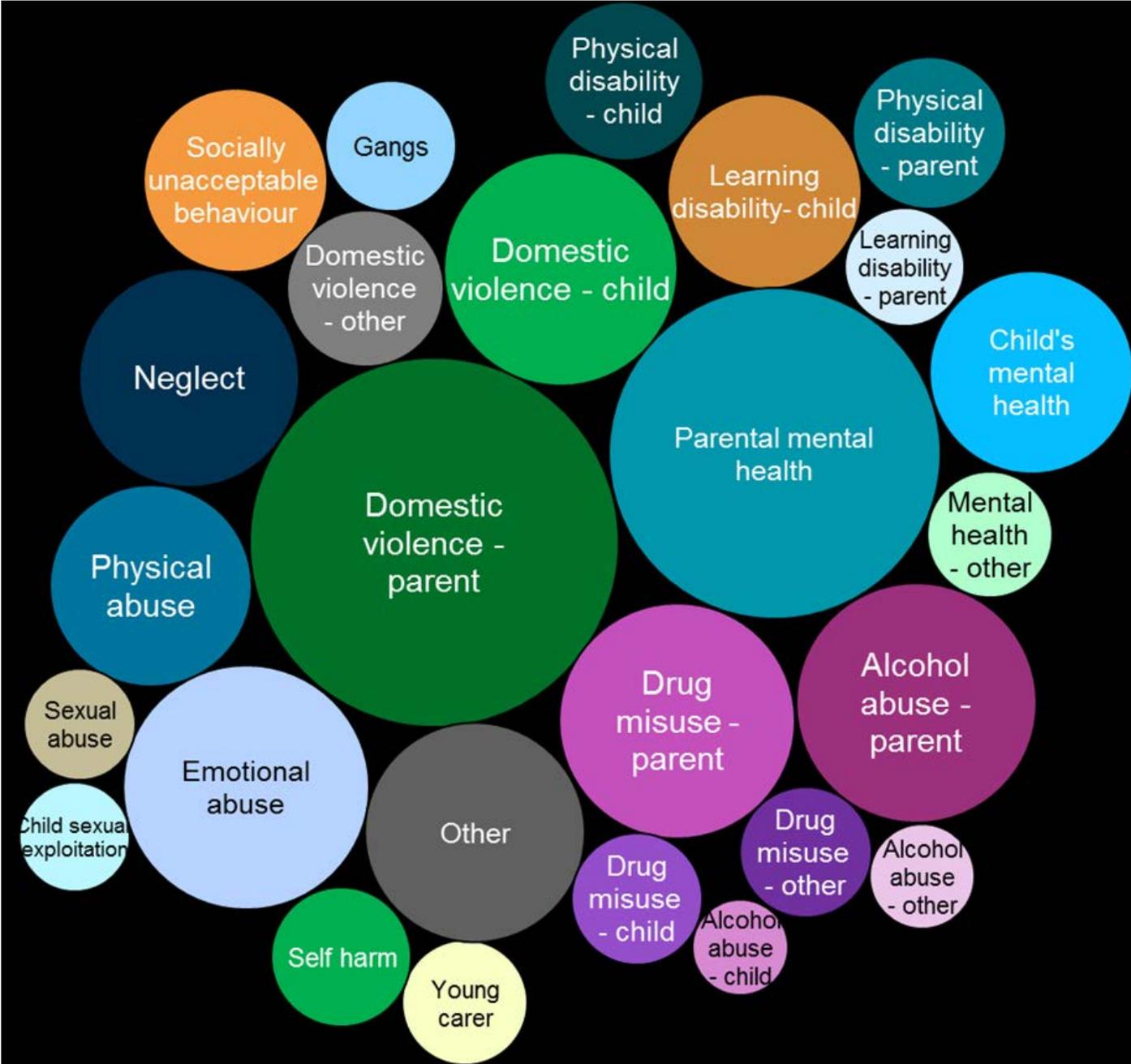
Pilot aim

To explore the feasibility and impact of trauma informed work in schools by:

- Delivering the ARC (Attachment, Regulation and Competency) framework training programme

- Equipping staff in Islington CAMHS in schools and PRUs team to lead ARC

- Supporting staff to embed trauma informed approaches in their work

Attachment

Regulation

Competency

- Organisational framework
- Used in many 'child- and family- serving systems'
- Used with a range of 'care-givers'
- Based on sound, well established psychological principles
- Fits well with ideas covered in the Solihull Approach
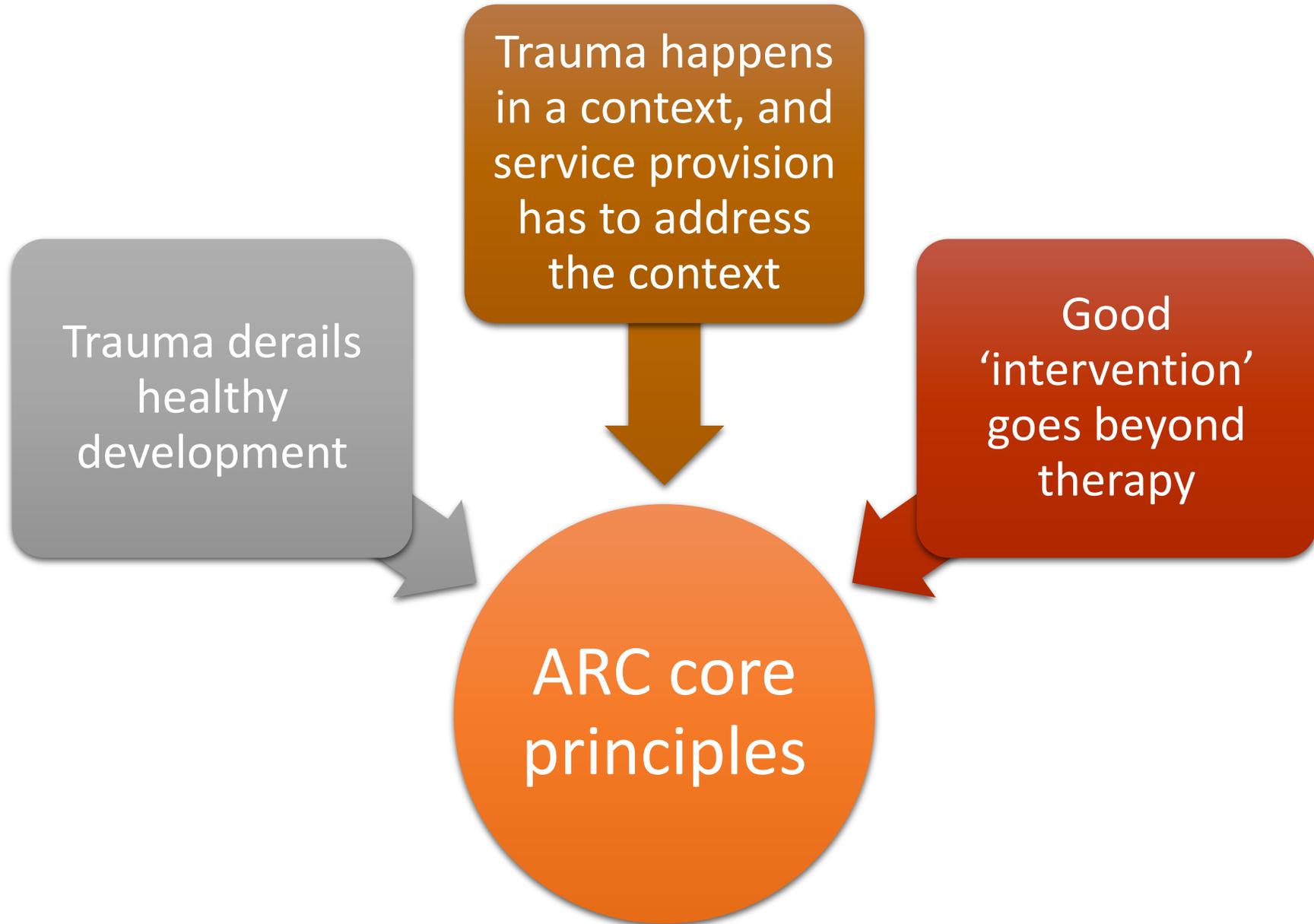
8 primary skills and building blocks
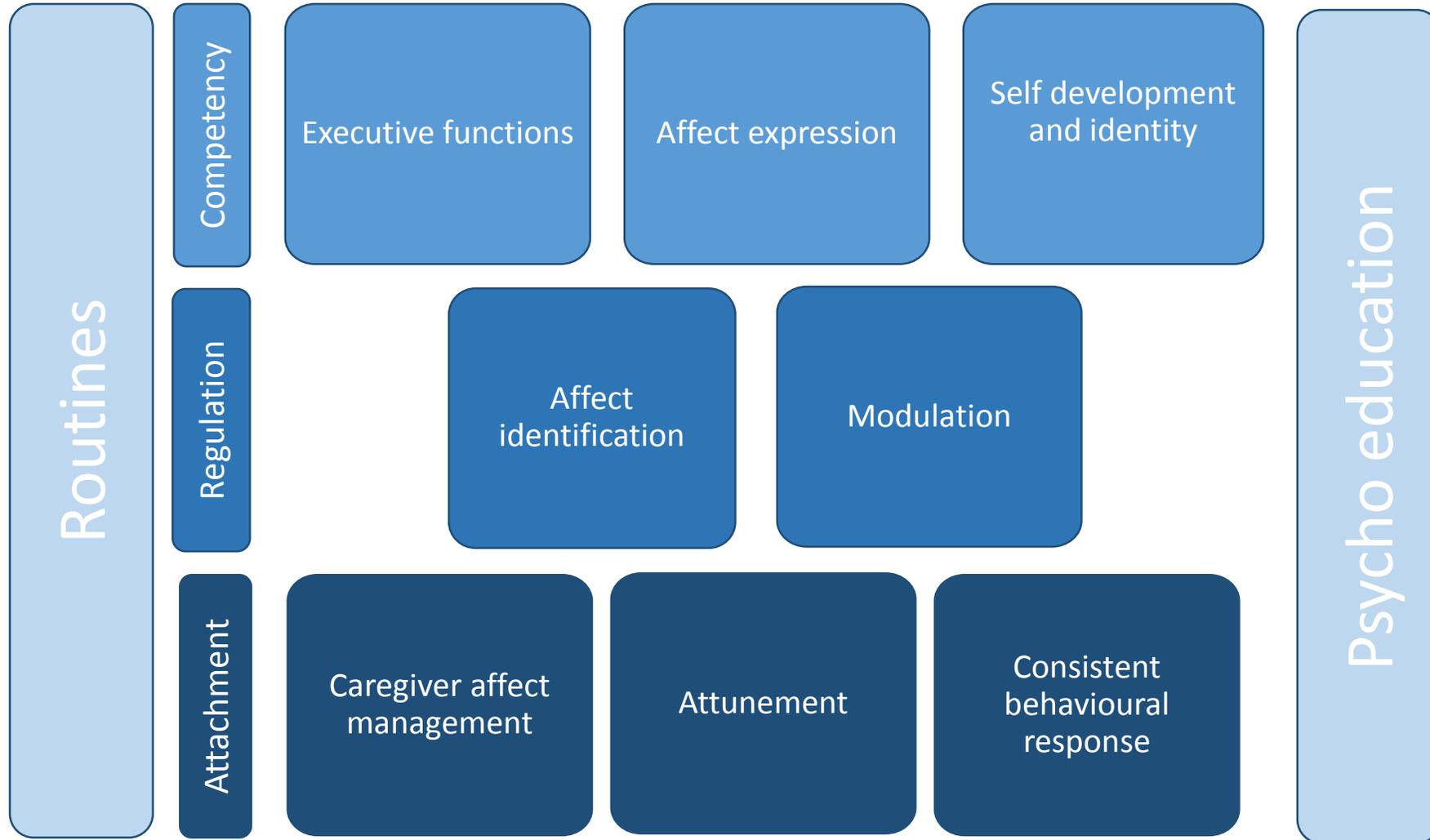
TIPPPS in Islington
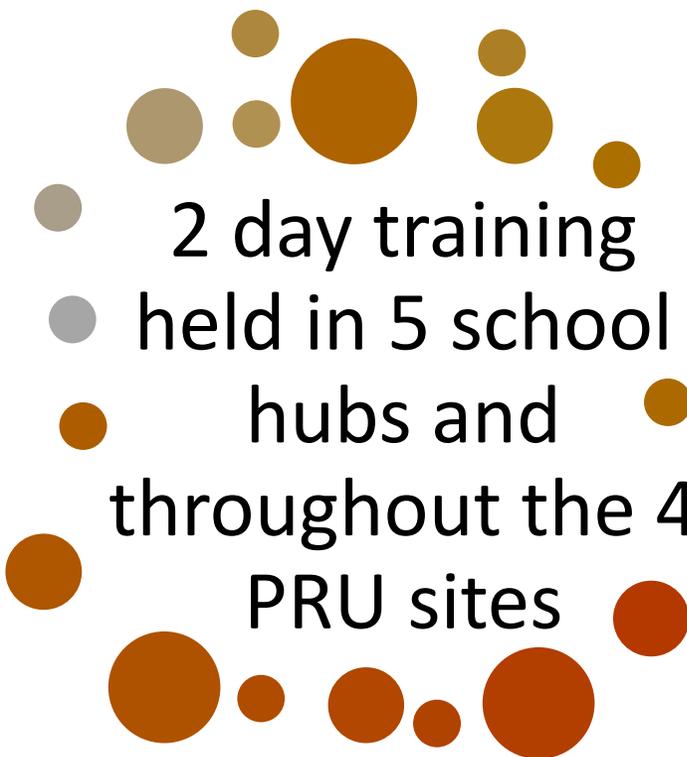
2 day training held in 5 school hubs and throughout the 4 PRU sites

CAMHS consultation for school staff and the team around the school

Changes in practice within school

Partnership work to support children, young people and their families

Learning about what works and adapting as we go…
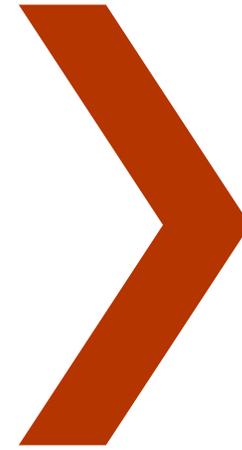
Better strategies to support children and young people who have experienced trauma

Progress so far…

❖	CAMHS in schools and PRU team trained in ARC model

❖	ALL staff in 4 PRU Sites and 5 primaries trained alongside partners

❖	Baseline staff and pupil questionnaires completed

❖	ARC clinicians supporting their link schools

❖	Four pupils identified in each setting to track case studies

❖	Informal feedback of successes and challenges continually shaping how the pilot evolves

Intended outcomes

- Staff are better equipped to support children who may be dealing with underlying trauma:

  o They can define trauma and understand its impact

  o They understand the ARC framework and its application

  o They know ways to support attachment, regulation and competency

  o They are better able to self-regulate and respond to vulnerability

Intended outcomes

- Children and young people see their school as being a sensitive and caring environment and one in which there is an adult who they feel comfortable talking to

- Schools have increased capability in supporting vulnerable children
  - Schools are better at holding cases of vulnerability
  - Schools are better at identifying vulnerability
  - Schools work more collaboratively with partners where there are concerns about individual pupils and make more effective use of referral pathway

- Schools experience improvements in school behaviour and attendance
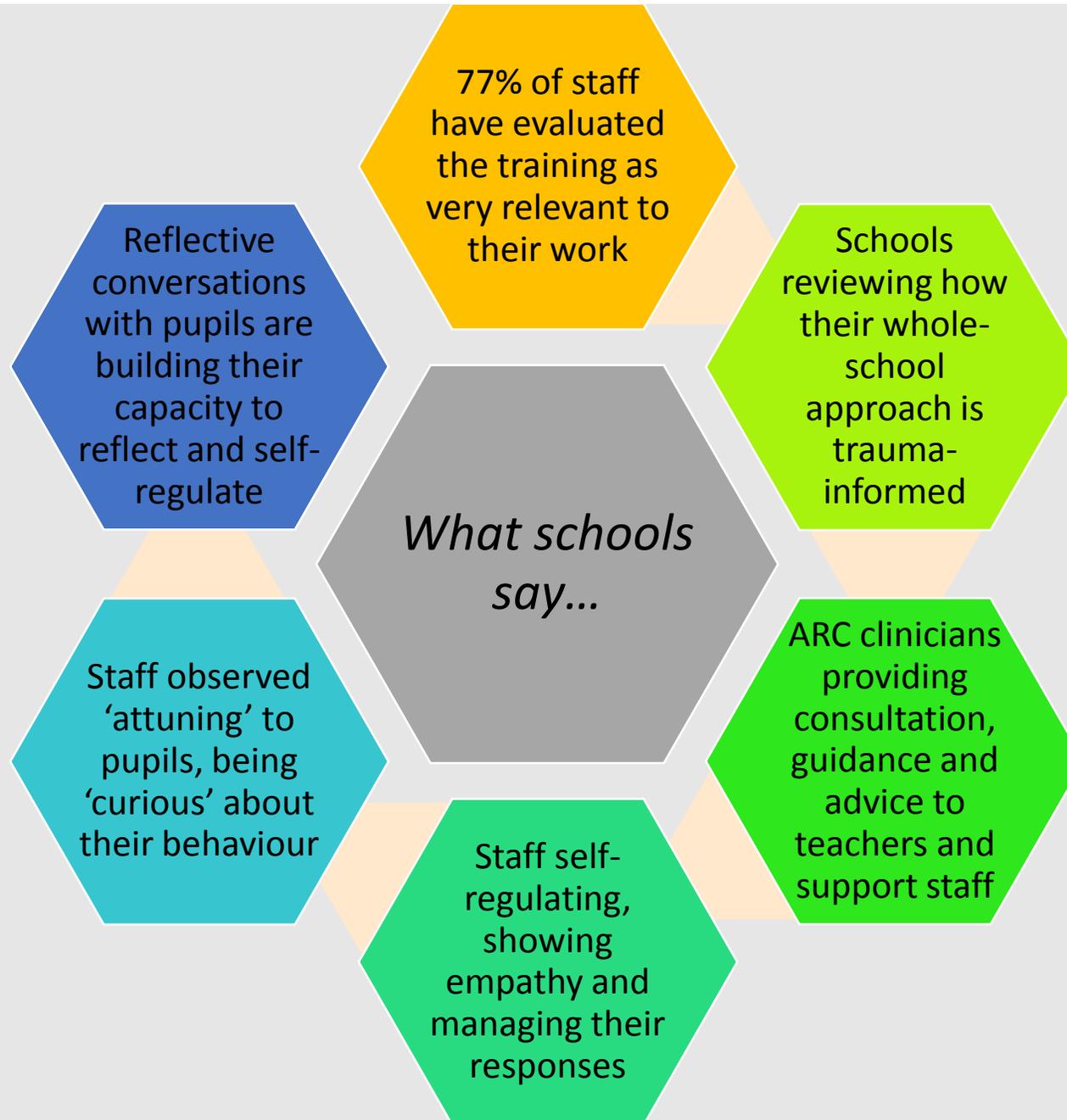
Staff are better equipped to support children who may be dealing with underlying trauma:

Helped to re-inforce what we already think might be underlying issues for some of our pupils

Helping me understand behaviours I previously would have labelled as naughty

Remember- don't take it personally we are dealing with children!

Learning about 'survival mode' and how it trumps everything; how that might present itself in different children

That SLT were present to understand this way of thinking can work

Identifying survival mode and how children do not learn in this mode

The need to look after ourselves and regulate our own behavioural reactions

We work with many of these children every day under many pressures re standards etc. Most useful thing is to have a single model ARC to work from

77% of staff have evaluated the training as very relevant to their work

Staff are better equipped to support children who may be dealing with underlying trauma:

Before the training, of staff surveyed, approximately…

4 out of 10 of staff surveyed were 'undecided', 'disagreed' or 'strongly disagreed' that they had a good understanding of trauma and its impact

9 out of 10 thought school staff can make a difference for these children

Activities

- Staff training delivered in different models in all schools

- Regular consultation for teaching staff with ARC clinician, to discuss supporting individual children and applying the ARC model

- Lesson observations by ARC clinician

- Regular workshops for teaching assistants with ARC clinician

- Teaching and support staff working together to support pupils to manage their behaviour

- Follow up staff meeting to reflect on the progress and experiences so far

Staff are better equipped to support children who may be dealing with underlying trauma:

What schools say...

- **Staff are attuning to pupils and being 'curious' about behaviour**

"I'm quite interested in particular, in the conversations that staff are having with pupils- they're seeking to understand where they are at and how to move them on"

"I suppose I would say that staff are more aware and more considerate to the reasons behind behaviour choices or actions"

"Staff do seem to be able to ask 'what happened to you' rather than 'what's wrong with you'"

"Staff are openly and thoughtfully discussing different children in a way that puts the trauma up front and centre to whatever the issue is for the child"

"Staff have been thinking about these children in a way that they perhaps would not have in the past, which has resulted in a difference response by the adult – leading to a more positive outcome for the child"

Staff are better equipped to support children who may be dealing with underlying trauma:

What schools say...

- **Improved staff-pupil interactions**

"A complete change in attitude of staff towards the four children (who have made huge leaps forward) has largely led to this change"

"We now have a senior member of staff who greets every pupil every morning and evening, by name at the gate"

"There is definitely lots more praise happening around the school, consistently reinforcing the desired behaviour"

"We now all discuss poor behaviour choices individually with pupils rather than in front of the class"

"We don't ask pupils to stand up if they're talking in assembly anymore. Instead we talk about pupils self-regulating"

Staff are better equipped to support children who may be dealing with underlying trauma:

What schools say...

- **Staff are better able to self-regulate and respond empathetically**

"We are definitely more aware of our responses"

"In the playground, I was always in fight, flight or freeze mode. Now I think before a situation. My colleagues have noticed it. I walk away sometimes when I have to"

"If there's a scenario where pupils are being difficult, the way they approach the scenario is different. They're thinking more as caregivers now, which underpins the ethos of the school"

"A few adults have found it difficult in the past to take their own emotions out of the equation and not take personally what is happening when a child is angry, etc. – this has definitely improved, however there is still some way to go"

"They are more likely to consider why a child is behaving in such a way and showing more empathy in light of this"

Staff are better equipped to support children who may be dealing with underlying trauma:

What schools say…

- **Staff are supporting each other to support pupils**

"It's interesting how we're developing a team approach towards vulnerable pupils- in terms of actually entering into a situation to assist another staff member- rather than leaving it to an individual, they're working as a team within the class. I'm noticing it happening more now- staff thinking 'what can I do to step in here'"

- **The training and support is particularly having an impact on support staff**

"The TA workshops are supporting the implementation of the model- they're meeting on a regular basis- they discuss situations and do mini case studies to understand the children more, to get the perspective on child, and understand why they are showing those behaviours. They discuss the appropriate responses and then share these discussions with others in the school. This keeps the model alive"

Children and young people see their school as being a sensitive and caring environment and one in which there is an adult who they feel comfortable talking to

Pupil questionnaire responses reflected that, on average, in a class of 30….

- 4 to 5 children 'never' or nearly never believe they can talk to teachers about their problems

- 3 to 4 children think there is 'never' or nearly never an adult at school who listens to them when they have something to say. A further 4 aren't sure.

- 3 to 4 children say they 'never' or nearly never believe that when they need help that they will find someone to talk to.

- 4 to 5 children 'never' or nearly never feel safe in school

- 10 children think there is 'never' or nearly never an adult at school who believes they will be a success. A further 7 aren't sure.

Children and young people see their school as being a sensitive and caring environment and one in which there is an adult who they feel comfortable talking to

What schools say...

- **Staff are having more reflective conversations with pupils**

"I now have a method to talk to him, whereas I didn't know what to do before"

"What I'm noticing in the school is people having trauma informed conversations with pupils"

"I have seen a change in children. An inspector that came in was told by a child about the dialogue before sanctions were put in place- this felt impressive"

- **Pupils are reflecting more on their feelings and emotions**

"We are trying hard to establish the vocabulary within pupils so they are better able to reflect and express themselves"

"Child A was going into shut-down regularly and not talking; now he's reflecting more, and even talking about the amygdala and the thinking brain. He's been having lots more conversations about behaviour with the staff. He even sometimes apologises for his behaviour"

Schools have increased capability in supporting vulnerable children

Activities

- Tweaking practices so they are in line with the ARC model

- Working group formed to oversee and drive the project

- Providing a space during play time for pupils to regulate and reflect

- ARC clinician supporting leadership team to consider how to integrate the ARC into the school

Before the training, of staff surveyed approximately…

Just over 7 out of 10 of staff surveyed were 'undecided', 'disagreed' or 'strongly disagreed' that staff at their school had a shared understanding of trauma, it's effect on pupils and their role in supporting pupils

Schools have increased capability in supporting vulnerable children

What schools say…

"Our working team, which is formed of teachers, regularly meet the ARC clinician to discuss how best to apply the model and link it to case studies in the school"

"This has contributed to our work already started on embedding our ethos across the school"

"The lunchtime space is making a big difference. Child A now takes himself to the lunchtime space after an incident. He says he also now goes to a quiet space at home when he's feeling chaotic"

"There have been some tweaks e.g. an adult giving a child the desired amount of time and space before dealing with a situation, rather than dealing with it at the time (most adults already did this, but the few who didn't, now do)"

"Four children who found following instructions, getting on with their peers, seeing beyond their point of view and dealing with any last minute changes in routine challenging, have all made huge leaps forward"

Schools experience improvements in school behaviour and attendance

Activities

- Schools are reviewing their behaviour policy to ensure they are based in restorative justice and support the ARC model. Examples of changes:
  - ➢ Ensuring rules are easy to remember
  - ➢ No detentions/exclusions
  - ➢ Cannot ban playtime as a punishment
  - ➢ Golden time can be accessed by anyone
  - ➢ A script for staff to use with pupils to challenge behaviour
- Schools are incorporating the ARC model in their practices:
  - ➢ Consistent responses
  - ➢ Rules and routines
  - ➢ Use of praise to encourage desired behaviours
  - ➢ Discussing incidents individually rather than in front of the class

Schools experience improvements in school behaviour and attendance

What schools say…

- **Pupils are better able to self-regulate**

"Child C comes and tells us that they really wanted to hit someone but didn't"

"One child came to me after an incident in the playground at lunch and said 'I've come to talk to you because I'm really angry about what happened, and I wanted to hit him but I didn't. I just wanted to talk to you'. The child said he would sit there and wait and talk once I was ready. This child can be very aggressive when he can't regulate. He's now telling staff regularly that he wanted to hit people but didn't"

"I am definitely noticing from walking around the school, that more pupils are taking a minute outside of the class to self-regulate, and then returning to learning"

Schools experience improvements in school behaviour and attendance

What schools say...

"I'm quite surprised at the difference we're already seeing. Its more effective with children who have experienced trauma- it's reducing conflict in the school"

"We're reviewing our policy. we're not at the stage where we're ready to abandon our behaviour management structures- but hope to adapt them so it can run alongside the trauma model."

"Behaviour policy has changed- now a consistent system in place for stepped actions and sanctions, all based in restorative justice- these are recorded and followed up by SLT"

"Some children's behaviours have moved from being dangerous to being brilliant"

"Generally there is an tangible improvement in overall behaviour for a small group of pupils"

"There have been fewer occasions where pupils' behaviour has fallen below the expected standard."

"There have been no internal or external exclusions in the past year"

Challenges identified by schools…

- **Staff**
  - Resistance from staff
  - Staff wellbeing
  - Difficulty in not reacting to behaviour
  - Lack of training time for support staff
  - Difficulty reflecting on own behaviour
  - Translating the trauma-informed practice across agencies
- **Whole-school approach**
  - Maintaining fairness, whilst accommodating all needs
  - Understanding the theory and using the vocabulary of the model
  - Emphasis on results and academic pressures on schools
  - Implementing new policy to manage behaviour
  - System sometimes in survival mode

- **Sustainability**
  - Staff turnover
  - Training – refresher and new staff
  - Building capacity and confidence of school leaders to lead ARC
  - Developing wider group of staff to take ownership and drive TIPPPS
  - Specialist support from CAMHS
- **Multi-agency work**
  - Scheduling ARC clinician's time in the school
  - Balancing the discussions on theory with practical strategies to use
- **Pilot**
  - Ambiguity with being a pilot school
  - Pressure to demonstrate success in one year

Next steps for schools…

- Developing the leadership of ARC in school
- Providing a space for staff to share their experiences, success and challenges with each other
- Forming a TIPPPS working group with members of staff from across the school
- Incorporating more opportunities to develop social and emotional literacy in the curriculum
- Further developing pupils' ability to reflect on their behaviour
- Consulting with parents on how the behaviour policy is working
- Monitoring continually disruptive behaviour

- Developing individual behaviour plans for particular vulnerable pupils
- Exploring ways to make the ARC model feel more school-friendly
- Celebrating moments of success with pupils and staff
- Sharing practice with other TIPPPS schools
- Teaching 'Pupil Mantras' to all pupils explicitly in class
  - I can choose to walk away
  - I can stop myself
  - I am OK
  - I am in control of myself
  - I can choose to be calm
  - I have a bigger goal than this argument/fight

Next steps for TIPPPS…

- Continue to support pilot schools to implement ARC and embed learning
- Evaluate outcomes at end of school year, continue evaluation in second year
- Further develop next stage of TIPPPS pilot, informed by the experiences of the pilot schools
  - Proposal to continue support for existing schools
  - Agree understanding of what a trauma-informed school looks like
  - Develop iARC model for schools
  - Establish coherent multi-agency team
  - Further embed approach in team around school meetings
  - Identify new cohort of schools

Schools' overall thoughts on the pilot…

It is a good way to get everyone in school on board with these principles

The model is naming ideas and principles that we personally believe in

We're seeing positive differences in the young people

The model helps to take a more nurturing approach to understanding children's backgrounds

Staff are well engaged, feel positive and want to give it a go

It's lucky that we've had such success with one child as an example that has very clearly helped. A tangible example of improvement.

ALL staff feel they have developed understanding of trauma and its impact upon children

It is nice having professional input as we are not trained in work with traumatised children.