

# Coping with Adversity - Trauma Informed Practice

**The JRF Report 'Closing the Attainment Gap in Scottish Education, 2014' highlights that children from disadvantaged backgrounds are more likely to be identified with social, emotional and behavioural (SEB) issues.** Along with this, evidence from JRF research and other studies suggest that, if carefully implemented, improving SEB competencies could play an important role in closing the attainment gap (Scott et al., 2010; Sharples et al., 2011; Gorard et al., 2012; Higgins et al., 2013). Most successful programmes are those that integrate SEB learning into a general approach aimed at increasing educational attainment rather than solely improving SEB learning. In light of these findings the 'Coping with Adversity' project was developed within a social, emotional and behavioural needs school in Inverclyde Council.

In 2017 a needs analysis in a school for young people with social, emotional and behavioural needs was completed with significant input from educational psychology, education, social work staff from the establishment and a forensic psychologist commissioned through the Inverclyde Attainment Challenge. It consisted of the following key aspects: completion of assessment profiles for pupils by staff reading files and cross referencing pupils' experiences against a trauma audit; structured interview by educational psychologist with young people to gauge their views on the proposed development work; a focus group of parents/carers led by educational psychologists to assess their views on the project; a series of feedback sessions and questionnaires with the multi-disciplinary team of staff in the school in order to assess their training needs.

Based upon the needs analysis a series of six training inputs was designed by the forensic psychologist. The delegates were the staff team from the school, the corporate parenting education team and educational psychologists. In order to embed the outcomes of the training into action workstreams were created and an implementation team established to ensure sustained progress and an evaluation framework followed to measure impact. The key workstreams were information sharing protocols and managing transitions; developing the health and wellbeing curriculum from a trauma informed perspective; effective use of the professional reflective opportunities.

The school supported by the educational psychology service, will produce 'Practice Guidelines' for new areas of practice resulting from the 'Coping with Adversity' work. The learnings will also be used to consider an adapted approach for another ASN establishment as well as work within secondary schools more generally.

