**ARC Review of ITT Core Content Framework**

**Introduction**

This guidance has been developed by an academic working group facilitated by the Attachment Research Community (ARC) between October 2022 and April 2023. A full list of the group’s membership is given at Appendix 1. The document is intended to support the development of the understanding of Trauma Informed and Attachment Aware Approaches for aspiring teachers, both as part of Initial Teacher Training, and through the Early Careers Framework. It has been informed both by current research, and by the experience of practitioners in Higher Education, SCITTS, MATs and individual schools.

The document should be read in the context of the Call to Action on Attachment and Trauma Awareness, teaching, learning and emotional wellbeing in schools, jointly published by ARC and NAVSH (ARC, 2022) and the ARC Matrix (ARC, 2023). These provide, respectively, the theoretical background to attachment aware approaches in schools, and a detailed practical methodology for implementing these approaches at individual, institutional and community level.

This document seeks to recognise:

1. The complexity of the evidence concerning relationships and emotions for children, young people and adults, and the need to avoid simplistic ‘solutions’ to perceived ‘problems’
2. The importance of developing Trauma Informed and Attachment Aware Approaches on a whole-school basis, rather than in response to specific identified ‘disadvantaged’ or ‘vulnerable’ groups
3. That relational approaches, self-regulation and emotional support are equally relevant to adults in schools, including teachers, other staff, parents/carers and community members, and should be taken into account in all developments

**Specific issues from the Teacher’s Standards, as set out in the Core Content Framework**

The comments on the following pages provide suggestions as to how Trauma Informed and Attachment Aware Approaches might be used to support aspiring teachers. These are set out, following the Core Curriculum and Early Career Frameworks, in terms of ‘Learn how to’, with relevant research evidence and some practical examples as to how these might look in practice.

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| **High Expectations (Standard 1 – ‘Set high expectations’)**  |
| **Learn that** | **ARC ‘Learn how to’** | **Relevant Research** | **What does this look like in practice?** |
| 1. Teachers have the ability to affect and improve the wellbeing, motivation and behaviour of their pupils.
2. Teachers are key role models, who can influence the attitudes, values and behaviours of their pupils.
3. Teacher expectations can affect pupil outcomes; setting goals that challenge and stretch pupils is essential.
4. Setting clear expectations can help communicate shared values that improve classroom and school culture.
5. A culture of mutual trust and respect supports effective relationships.
6. High-quality teaching has a long-term positive effect on pupils’ life chances, particularly for children from disadvantaged backgrounds.
 | Understand that not all students share the same background and may experience school in a different way.Develop strong relationships with all students which enables consistency, trust and safety for the individuals. Develop effective communication with parents and carers and professionals to ensure consistent approaches to supporting pupils with barriers to learningUnderstand that those who have experienced trauma may have difficulty in engaging with conventional ‘sanctions and award approaches to learning and discipline’. This is not an excuse to give up on individuals, but to understand the need to find ways of engaging positively with all studentsUnderstand that students who have experienced trauma often require support to manage learning, however, as educational professionals we must be conscious of promoting independence as much as possible.Understand that these issues are particularly relevant to children with poor mental health, and that traditional behaviourist or ‘zero tolerance’ approaches may be particularly damaging for themUnderstand that background should not place limits on aspirations and beware judgement on this basis and that standard ages for attaining qualifications are not the only way. Introduce careers woven into learning as a way of raising aspirations | Timpson Report on Exclusions (2019)Adolescents who perceive their teachers as responsive and supportive are more likely to persist in academic tasks (Ben-Gal Dahan & Mikulincer, 2021)Acar et al. (2022) found positive significant associations between teacher-child closeness and children’s learning and found teacher-child conflict was detrimental to children’s learning behaviour. This suggests close teacher-child relationships encourage pupil engagement and motivation.These findings raise the question of whether it is realistic to expect all teachers to hold an implicit understanding of what constitutes a close teacher-pupil relationship. The standardised, evidence-based Emotion Coaching approach has been demonstrated to be effective at improving these relationships, emotional control, and academic achievement (Gilbert et al., 2021)Cameron et al (2015) consider potential tensions in the relationship between schools and foster carersMany commentators Bergin and Bergin (2009); O’Connor and Russell (2004) estimate that this may affect between a third and a quarter of children in every classroomScales et al (2020) show that schools which are merely ‘caring’ do not impact on student performance, but those which combine caring approaches with robust and appropriate challenge do improve student engagement in learningStahl (2021) asked boys with low socio-economic status to reflect on the factors enabling them to be the first generation of their family to attend university. They identified it was teachers who balanced persistent nurturing with support to raise aspirations. Mulholland and Parker (2022) discussed their school experience with a group of children and young people with mental health difficulties. They confirmed that the quality of interactions and relationships with teachers was vital to their wellbeing The SEND Code of Practice (DfE and DoH, 2014) advocates high expectations. The Ofsted Early Inspection Framework (Ofsted, 2019) challenges the narrowing of the curriculum, promoting high aspirations across the curriculum.   | Have open conversations with students about their lives and schooling history. Offer them nurture and reassurance that you will support them.Set aside time for informal conversations or activities with students away from curriculum demands to get to know them better (e.g a game of uno, a cup of tea together).Think of each student as an individual. Have open conversations with parents and carers about what works in terms of sanctions and rewards. Work with parents and carers to have open communication about behaviour to ensure the student understands adults are working together. Hold students to high expectations, be clear with students and hold a ‘black and white’ consistent approach across the staff team regarding behaviour; whilst also holding in mind that some students will require something ‘different’ due to their presenting needs. Consider your body language and tone of voice. Keeping a neutral and calm voice will support students who have suffered trauma to feel safe. Consider the amount of support students are receiving for different aspects of learning, consider where support can carefully be decreased over time. For example, a student who is a high attainer in art but low in maths and requires an adult to support them due to anxiety may have the adult slowly withdrawn from working next to them in art but remaining in the classroom.  |

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| **Adaptive Teaching (Standard 5 – ‘Adapt teaching’)**  |
| **Learn that** | **ARC ‘Learn how to’** | **Relevant Research** | **What does this look like in practice?** |
| 1. Pupils are likely to learn at different rates and to require different levels and types of support from teachers to succeed.
2. Seeking to understand pupils’ differences, including their different levels of prior knowledge and potential barriers to learning, is an essential part of teaching.
3. Adapting teaching in a responsive way, including by providing targeted support to pupils who are struggling, is likely to increase pupil success.
4. Adaptive teaching is less likely to be valuable if it causes the teacher to artificially create distinct tasks for different groups of pupils or to set lower expectations for particular pupils.
5. Flexibly grouping pupils within a class to provide more tailored support can be effective, but care should be taken to monitor its impact on engagement and motivation, particularly for low attaining pupils.
6. There is a common misconception that pupils have distinct and identifiable learning styles. This is not supported by evidence and attempting to tailor lessons to learning styles is unlikely to be beneficial.
7. Pupils with special educational needs or disabilities are likely to require additional or adapted support; working closely with colleagues, families and pupils to understand barriers and identify effective strategies is essential.
 | Identify potential barriers for individuals, while avoiding stereotyping.Discover ways of relating to individual students and identify ways of engaging their interest.Recognise individual learning needs and how to access appropriate additional support in consultation with the SENCO or mentor.Acknowledge that learners are highly variable in their response to instruction. Recognise that as much as possible the teacher should be working with the students with learning needs including students who have suffered trauma to ensure they are receive quality first teaching. Understand that adapting teaching and learning involves scaffolding activities for students rather than differentiating and inclusion by design will improve your workload and support more students.  | There is considerable literature on inclusion. issues for children with SEND, but also on the stereotyping of different ethnic minorities (see for example Strand and Lindorff, 2018). Similarly, there are a number of studies of the stereotyping of educational ability for children in care, for example Bentley (2013), Cameron et al (2015) and Become (2018)The CAST Universal Design for Learning based in cognitive science and supporting young people to become expert leaners can support more students to develop their learning. CAST (2018) | Take time to reflect as a staff team (teacher and TA SENCO, Head of Year) to think about potential triggers and pre-empt barriers, developing a consistent approach.This could be detailed on a pupil passport or one page profile.For example, breaking down a worksheet into small chunks to avoid a sense of being over-whelmed, Acknowledge with students that learning is hard, give some examples of where you have found learning challenging. Reassure the student you are there to support them and incorporate metacognitive strategies into your daily teaching.  For students who are less engaged with learning, seek building in real life examples and their key interests. At times it may take you presenting a worksheet on several occasions for a student to attempt it. You can adapt your teaching by using the following: day 1, present and talk through worksheet, no expectation of student completing worksheet. Day 2, re-introduce the sheet to the student. Expectation of the student starting the sheet but with a clear ending point identified. Day 3, student to complete some more of the sheet. This style of adaptation is supportive to students who are afraid of completing work. Arrange regular meetings with the school SENCO to explore individual student needs. Consider how whole class adaptation can be embedded into teaching. For example, embedding into all teaching that dual coding is used (images to support learning) which is beneficial for all students not just those with need.  |
| **Assessment (Standard 6 – ‘Make accurate and productive use of assessment’)**  |
| **Learn that** | **ARC ‘Learn how to’** | **Relevant Research** | **What does this look like in practice?** |
| 1. Effective assessment is critical to teaching because it provides teachers with information about pupils’ understanding and needs.
2. Good assessment helps teachers avoid being over-influenced by potentially misleading factors, such as how busy pupils appear.
3. Before using any assessment, teachers should be clear about the decision it will be used to support and be able to justify its use.
4. To be of value, teachers use information from assessments to inform the decisions they make; in turn, pupils must be able to act on feedback for it to have an effect.
5. High-quality feedback can be written or verbal; it is likely to be accurate and clear, encourage further effort, and provide specific guidance on how to improve.
6. Overtime, feedback should support pupils to monitor and regulate their own learning. Working with colleagues to identify efficient approaches to assessment is important; assessment can become onerous and have a disproportionate impact on workload.
 | Develop and use assessment approaches which are appropriate to the task in hand, and which support the development of learning.Avoid stereotyping (see above)Understand that for some children who have experienced trauma, or who have had difficulties in making secure attachments with adults, assessment processes can be particularly difficult and challenging. Such children may refuse to engage, or consciously set themselves up to ‘fail’. Other practical issues may intrude if they do not have the confidence to ask for help.Consider carefully the nature of feedback given to pupils and the audience as individual constructive feedback in the presence of others can be difficult to manage.Understand that students who have suffered trauma and display learning needs will progress at different rates. It is important to celebrate the small successes to ensure students feel a sense of achievement.  | Colley and Cooper (2017) suggest tools (e.g. Boxall) to support identifying areas for intervention which should be used in conjunction with ’assess, plan, do review’ cycleParker (2022), for example, describes a child with dyslexia who did not have appropriate coloured paper and could not read the digital clock in a GCSE examination room. Instead of asking for help she simply swore at the invigilator and stormed out. | Carefully think about the environment and resources required to support students to complete assessments. Sometimes, you may need to be creative and deliver assessments in a way which is not typical (sitting in the reading corner, 15 minute sittings with breaks in between). Depending on the individual, find a way to communicate their successes no matter how big or small. An example being, writing on a post it note ‘I like the way you came into class this morning’. Recognise that some students will not like public praise and may respond better to indirect or group feedback.Offering students reassurance when assessments are approaching with a clear plan of support discussed with the student before assessments begin. For example, what is the plan if the student becomes overwhelmed and has a panic attack in the assessment?  |
| **Managing Behaviour (Standard 7 – ‘Manage behaviour effectively’)**  |
| **Learn that** | **ARC ‘Learn how to’** | **Relevant Research** | **What does this look like in practice?**  |
| 1. Establishing and reinforcing routines, including through positive reinforcement, can help create an effective learning environment.
2. A predictable and secure environment benefits all pupils, but is particularly valuable for pupils with special educational needs.
3. The ability to self-regulate one’s emotions affects pupils’ ability to learn, success in school and future lives.
4. Teachers can influence pupils’ resilience and beliefs about their ability to succeed, by ensuring all pupils have the opportunity to experience meaningful success.
5. Building effective relationships is easier when pupils believe that their feelings will be considered and understood.
6. Pupils are motivated by intrinsic factors (related to their identity and values) and extrinsic factors (related to reward).
7. Pupils’ investment in learning is also driven by their prior experiences and perceptions of success and failure.
 | Maintain a supportive and calm learning environment through respectful relationships, while reassuring more vulnerable pupils that they will not be unfairly ‘picked on’ for minor infractions of school rules. Understand that, for some children the ability to self-regulate needs to be nurtured, and clumsy hierarchical interventions by teachers may be counter-productive. Conversely, developing understanding with students is highly effective in developing resilience and ability to self-regulate. Learn that having consistent shared ‘scripts’ available and liaising with parents and carers are invaluable to improving practice and understanding Understand that reasonable adjustments, consistency and relational approaches have the potential to support self-regulation for students, reducing behaviour incidents | The current DfE approach to behaviour is based on the Bennett (2017) Report. This is based on a behaviourist ‘zero tolerance’ approach, which has been criticised in a number of publications such as Parker et al (2016) and Parker and Levinson (2018)Whitaker (2021) advocates a relational approach to behaviour management Teachers trained to use Emotion Coaching develop greater self-regulation (making them less susceptible to burn out). In addition, there is a reduction in their pupils’ disruptive behaviour, a reduction in their pupils’ need for rewards and sanctions, and improvements in pupil social and emotional competences (Rose et al., 2015) | A consistent approach across the school staff team is key in relation to behaviour. Students who have suffered trauma can feel uncontained when boundaries and expectations are unclear. When students are escalating in their behaviour, it is important to remain calm in voice and in body stance. Offering students options to ‘shift’ the breakdown is important. For example, space in the library or kicking a football in the hall. Teach all students about differences and how all individuals will require different interventions to help them in life. For example, some students may need music and headphones to help them feel calm whereas others might need a book and quiet space. Consider your environment and create a nurturing space with soft furnishings available for students to use when they are over-whelmed or need some time away from learning. Develop a sense of independence with the students by asking them to create a bank of strategies as to what supports them to regulate when they are finding things challenging and encourage the students to identify key triggers. Build in restorative approaches, however, consider how this may look. It may be that students apologise through an activity, such as making a cup of tea or an apology for a card rather than verbally saying sorry. See each day as a fresh start. This is especially important for students who have gone through trauma. They are likely to test relationships to explore whether adults will walk away from them because this is what they are used to. Turning up each day and welcoming them into your classroom no matter how difficult the day before was will provide a sense of belonging, care and trust for the student.  |
| **Professional Behaviours (Standard 8 – ‘Fulfil wider professional responsibilities’)**  |
| **Learn that** | **ARC ‘Learn how to’** | **Relevant Research** | **What does this look like in practice?** |
| 1. Effective professional development is likely to be sustained over time, involve expert support or coaching and opportunities for collaboration.
2. Reflective practice, supported by feedback from and observation of experienced colleagues, professional debate, and learning from educational research, is also likely to support improvement.
3. Teachers can make valuable contributions to the wider life of the school in a broad range of ways, including by supporting and developing effective professional relationships with colleagues.
4. Building effective relationships with parents, carers and families can improve pupils’ motivation, behaviour and academic success**.**
5. Teaching assistants (TAs) can support pupils more effectively when they are prepared for lessons by teachers, and when TAs supplement rather than replace support from teachers.
6. SENCOs, pastoral leaders, careers advisors and other specialist colleagues also have valuable expertise and can ensure that appropriate support is in place for pupils.
7. Engaging in high-quality professional development can help teachers improve
 | Develop effective relations with parents, carers and families, as well as, at times, other members of the community eg faith leadersEngage with SEND, safeguarding and other appropriate colleagues from an early stage, and not see this as a sign of weakness Develop relationships-based approaches to pupils. Develop professional, trusting and team-oriented working relationships with TAs and colleagues.Learn how to reflect on and understand the wider historical, cultural and social context for education and care, and how that has shaped certain taken-for-granted practices, prejudices and perspectives in schools'Engage with and understand a variety of perspectives, rather than being expected to uncritically accept a single way of doing things, which may be based on prejudices rather than wider evidence | Dix (2017) suggests that self-awareness , building effective relationships and self-reflection of professionals themselves is essential when working with children and young people.Brooks (2019) is a very useful practical guide to implementing attachment aware approachesJackson (2001 and 2013) gives a range of historical perspectives on educational policy and schools as experienced by children in careMeta-analysis of 189 studies, covering 249,198 pupils (Roorda *et al.,* 2017), found positive and negative aspects of the teacher-pupil relationship were significantly associated with pupil engagement and achievement in both primary and secondary schools (i.e., negative aspects influenced engagement negatively and positive aspects had a positive impact). The association grew stronger in secondary school settings.Phase 1 of the Attachment Aware School (AAS) Project found pupils demonstrated significant improvements in reading, writing, and maths alongside significant reductions in sanctions and exclusions. Staff reported improvements in their own emotional regulation, self-control, and sense of wellbeing (Rose, *et al*., 2019). Oxford University evaluations of the Attachment Aware Schools (AAS) Phase 1 Pilot Project (Dingwall & Sebba, 2018; Fancourt & Sebba, 2018) findings, and the Working Papers of the Alex Timpson Attachment Aware Schools Programme (Rees Centre , 2022) echo those of the AAS project authors. The evaluations found the AAS approach to be effective at promoting staff and pupil universal mental health and wellbeing, and at supporting specialised social, emotional, and mental health issues. The authors noted staff reported improvements in their understanding of attachment and Emotion Coaching, greater confidence, beneficial changes to their practice, effective use of EC, improved understanding of the reasons pupils behave in certain ways, and said their school felt calmer. Harrison (2020) indicated that EC was by far the most popular strategy adopted by the 24 schools in that particular sample.Phase 2 of the Attachment Aware Schools (AAS) Project (Gentle et al. 2023) found training teachers and support staff in attachment awareness and Emotion Coaching led to a range of pupil and staff benefits. Improvements included (but were not limited to) improved understanding of consequences, empathy, ability to manage own anxiety, improved concentration, motivation, independence, and academic progress Emotion Coaching (EC) (Havighurst *et al*., 2021; Wilson *et al*., 2013) is a relational approach that draws on attachment theory and other evidence-based theories. It has been applied successfully to improve the psychological functioning of children who have experienced trauma and to reduce the externalising behaviours of children with autism spectrum disorder Other approaches are available, such as Nurture Groups (see Colley and Seymour, 2021) | Where possible, attend network meetings about students within your class. Look for opportunities to continue your personal development through attending training such as an introduction to social, emotional and mental, health (eg The Mulberry Bush, 2023) Develop trusting relationships with students to gain an insight to their wider lives. Seek opportunities to pause and reflect with colleagues around working with individuals. Exploring the impact on ourselves of working alongside students is an important aspect of professional development. Remain open minded when working with individuals regarding their historical behaviours.Develop trusting relationships with colleagues and support staff. Ensure staff working with you in the classroom have the required information and understanding to support the students as you would like. |

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