



A framework for mental health
and resilience in schools



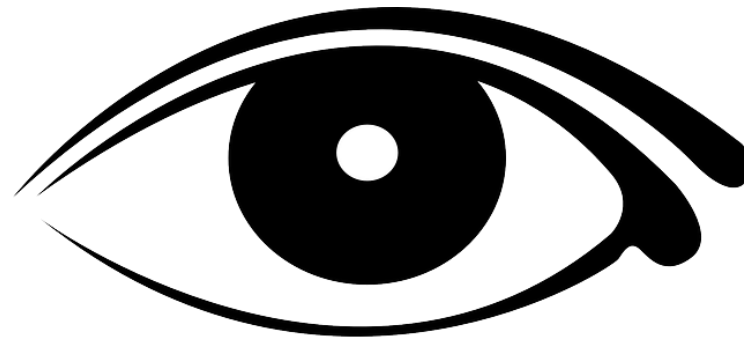
Islington Trauma
Informed Practices
in Schools



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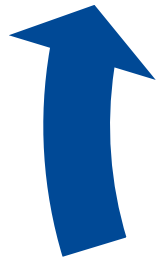
Islington and whole school approaches

Helen Cameron, health and wellbeing manager



Do!

Review practice



Consider next steps and plan



Identify strengths and challenges



Further develop understanding



Consider where to make change



Support to make the changes

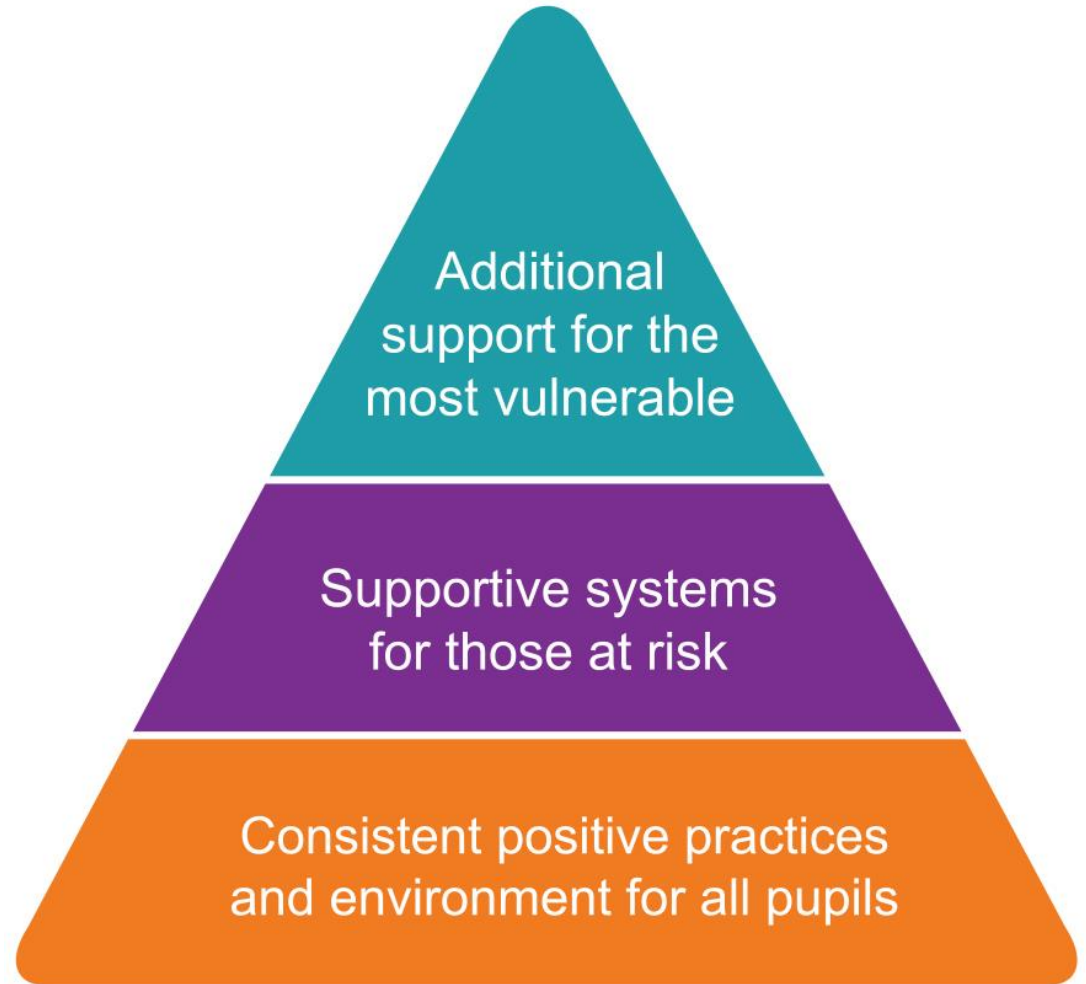


Islington Trauma Informed Practices in Schools



Islington Mental Health and Resilience in Schools (iMHARS)

- Evidence supports the impact of consistent, positive, universal practices
- Systems in place to support those at risk and the most vulnerable
- Prevention and early-intervention

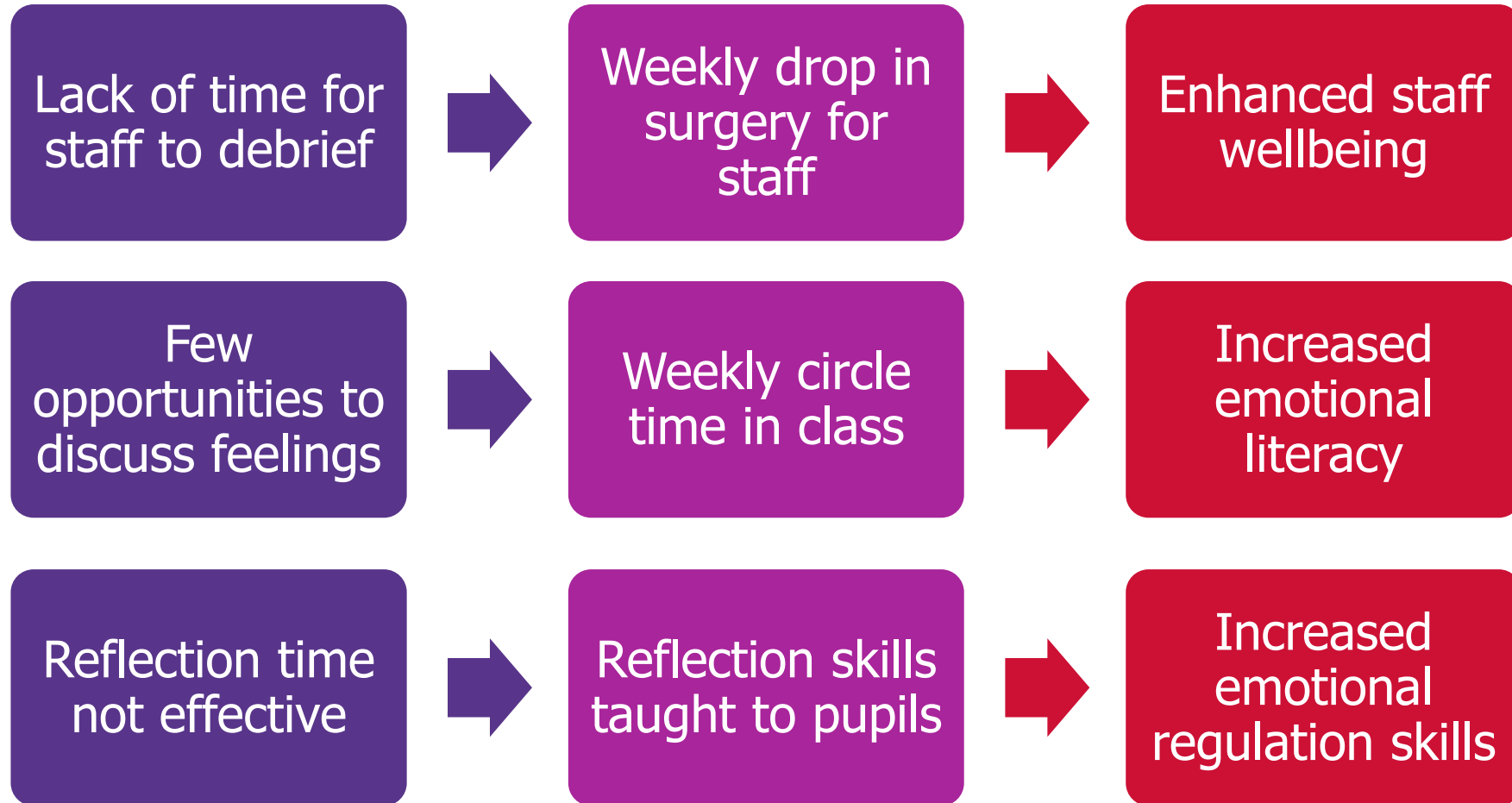


The iMHARS framework

- Seven key aspects of school life that support good mental health and resilience
- Use with schools to research practice, identify strengths, gaps and next steps
- 52% of schools (34) have used iMHARS (3 special, 6/10 secondary and 25/46 primary schools)



What difference does iMHARS make?



What schools say...

Post iMHARS feedback



- 100% of schools said they found the overall process 'useful' or 'very useful'
- Schools say they have a better understanding of how systems support mental health, and their role as schools
- Valued opportunities for stakeholders to share their views and experiences
- Benefits to gaining an external perspective
- Emphasis on adapting and improving systems in place



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What is complex trauma?

Complex trauma is a response to overwhelming negative life events and experiences which happen to children over time, often within their families, communities and personal relationships.

If there is no safe adult to help a child process what is happening the experience is more likely to have a traumatic effect.

Trauma is common



Intended outcomes

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



CAMHS / EPS consultation for school staff and the team around the school

School working group established

Research of existing school practice, identification of next steps

Whole school action plan

Partnership work to support children, young people and their families

Learning about what works and adapting as we go...



And?

- Staff report having a better understanding of trauma and its impact; have an increased range of strategies to respond to pupils' challenging behaviour and feel more confident that they can help pupils manage their emotions
 - *“There have been fewer occasions where pupils' behaviour has fallen below the expected standard.”*
- Staff describe being better able to self-regulate and respond to pupils with empathy
 - *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”*
- 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
 - *‘I need to take a step back to think about what are all the other factors that could be influencing their behaviour. Where pupils are flipping out, it really made me think that's their life and it's my job to help them make sense of their emotions.*

And pupils?

- Pupils are reflecting more on their own feelings and developing more skills relating to regulation
 - *“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.”*
 - *“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.”*
 - *“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.”*