

***Attachment and Trauma Sensitive Schools Award (ATSSA)***

*A framework of support and understanding for schools and other educational establishments within which children and young people who have experienced adversity, can heal, thrive, play, and learn.*



The Attachment and Trauma Sensitive Schools Award (ATSSA) aims to provide a framework of support and understanding for schools and other educational establishments within which children and young people who have experienced adversity, can heal, thrive, play, and learn. These will include those who are adopted from care, in the care of the Local Authority, or live with parents who cannot, for whatever reason cannot adequately meet their needs.

The Award aims to ensure that everyone within the educational environment has a good knowledge of the needs of children and young people who have experienced adversity and of the strategies and resources that are available to meet such needs. This awareness of how to support children and young people’s emotional needs and development is a key factor in promoting better learning and mental/physical health outcomes for all learners.

The Attachment and Trauma Sensitive Schools Award is an external sign of recognition of the commitment of schools and to the steps they take to develop a culture of compassion and nurture, which plays a pivotal role in getting children and young people into a state of ‘learning readiness’. The award is issued only to those educational establishments that can demonstrate that they have met its rigorous quality standards and can maintain them over time.

Above all, achieving the Attachment and Trauma Sensitive Schools Award communicates to all interested parties, including children and young people, parents and carers, staff, Governors and other stakeholders within and beyond the local community that the school is committed to embracing inclusion at its best, successfully removing barriers to learning and participation in the life of the school.

The process is designed to be easily accessible in terms of cost, time and evidence gathering. We hope that all schools registering for the Award will find the journey easy to navigate and supportive of developing best practice. Please read on for more information.

**Attachment and Trauma Sensitive Schools Award (ATSSA)**

A three year process with three levels of achievement:

*Bronze - Attachment and Trauma Aware (ATA)*

*Silver - Attachment and Trauma Friendly (ATF)*

*Gold - Attachment and Trauma Committed (ATC)*

Some schools may enter the process at the ATA or ATF level, and providing they can evidence this, the ATA or ATF will be awarded

JNTC can provide training for schools at all levels. Schools may receive training from other bodies, but the content of such training will be scrutinised to ensure that key components are covered, and informal interviews with selected members of staff across all levels will be carried out.

Documented evidence and witness statements will be accepted as evidence, but at each level, a final verification visit from approved persons to observe and discuss practice will be mandatory. During the ATC phase, two visits will take place, one at very short notice.

Administration costs will be kept to a minimum to ensure that as many schools as possible apply for the award. Costs for Consultancy days will be discounted, as will training, for schools applying for the award at any level.

Schools can buy in to a full programme of support **if they wish**, and an example of a Bronze package can be seen below. **Please note that this is an example only, and some schools may only need or choose a half-day consultation with the Awarding Body to conduct the verification visit.** The final content of the programme of support will be agreed between the Lead Consultant and the School Representative, usually, but not always, the Headteacher or Principal.

**Example of Attachment and Trauma Sensitive Schools Award Training and support programme Year 1: Bronze - Attachment and Trauma Aware**

**Overview**

Training days x 1 (could be 2x3hour sessions)

Observation and consultation x 2

**Training**

Training will be delivered early in the process to ensure all staff have basic understanding about the impact of developmental, relational trauma.

* Attachment Demystified (or similar from approved trainer): Introductory bespoke training covering the formation of attachment, attachment styles, developmental vulnerabilities and school as a safe base, tailored to meet the specific training needs of educators within a school or cluster of schools (six hours).
* Bespoke training for SL/MT focused on strategic planning for becoming an Attachment and Trauma Sensitive School (minimum half day or twilight – three hours)
* ENGLISH, WELSH AND NORTHERN IRISH SCHOOLS ONLY - Training for Governors: NICE Guidelines on attachment in children who are adopted, in care or at risk; overview of attachment; implications for schools (minimum half day or twilight). Alternatively, Governors could attend whole school and/or SL/MT training to achieve this criterion

*NB Schools are encouraged to invite colleagues from other settings to training days to offset costs*

**Observation and consultation**

**Initial Audit Visit**: Observations will be carried out across the school, general recommendations will be made about developing Attachment and Trauma Sensitive practice. Consultation and discussion with leaders, managers and key staff, as appropriate will take place, and a comprehensive written report regarding issues and recommendations, with action points, will be provided following the visit.

Observation and consultation days may incorporate training for leaders, managers, governors etc., and/or Key Worker support. This will comprise training to develop understanding of developmental vulnerabilities and facilitate the development of authentic attachment relationships. They will be supported in developing individual action plans, with reference to concerns, targets and actions, with the aim of reducing unwanted behaviour and increasing the pupils’ perception of safety, thus, over time, raising pupils’ levels of ability to access the curriculum and social relationships within the school.

**Verification Consultation Visit:** When the Evidence Folder has been submitted and scrutinised, a representative of the Awarding Body (usually Jennifer Nock), will visit the school in order to verify the information submitted, prior to formally granting the Award.

**Renewal of status of ATA and ATF**

For schools not wishing to progress to Silver - ATF or Gold - ATC, the Award will be monitored and renewed biennially, through a one day visit for discussion with key staff, including SLT, evidence of ongoing CPD, updated documents and policies and stakeholder feedback.

When schools register for the Gold - Attachment and Trauma Committed Award, they will be monitored over a further one year period and (usually) two visits will take place, one at very short notice. Providing consistency of attachment and trauma sensitive practice is evidenced, Attachment-Committed Status will be awarded. The Status will be monitored and renewed biennially, through a one day visit for discussion with key staff, including SLT, evidence of ongoing CPD, updated documents and policies and stakeholder feedback.

**costings**

Fees for all training and consultancy services will be discounted by 20 per cent for schools working towards the Award at any level.

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| **Service** | **Usual cost** | **-20% discount** |
| Training full day  | £980+VAT (£1176) | £784+VAT (£940.80) |
| Training half day/twilight  | £680+VAT (£816) | £544+VAT (£652.80) |
| Consultancy (between 3 to 7 @ £100+VAT per hour)  | Max £700+VAT (£840) | Max £560+VAT (£672) |

The Award itself costs £300+VAT (£360), £100+VAT payable upon registration, and final £200+VAT on achieving the Award.

As noted previously, schools can opt for as much or little support and training as they require. Some schools may want a full package of extended training and advisory visits, while others may wish to register for the Award, complete and submit the Evidence Folder, and receive a final, three hour verification visit. In the latter case the total cost would be £300+VAT for the Award fee and £240+VAT for the verification visit.

Telephone and email support will be available, at no additional cost, throughout the process.

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Award Administrator: Bridie White

Email: Bridiewhitejntc@hotmail.com

Phone 07947 555 329 or 07983 482 804

Website: http://www.attachmentandtraumasensitiveschoolsaward.com/