

## What do we mean by 'attachment-focused schooling'?

At Highfields, one of our biggest aims is to help students and their families recognise – and accept – where they are at in life. Again, this is not about judgement or blame – most if not all of us have been there.

We work every day at Highfields to help our young people readjust their view of relationships. In particular, how they work alongside adults and other young people.

We do this in a number of **nurturing** ways:

- By making sure every young person has familiar adults working with them every day.
- By providing extended opportunities outside of the classroom for young people to experience positive relationships with adults – through breakfast and lunch, through 'play time', through adults who listen and stay calm.
- By providing a range of mentoring programmes, alongside their subjects, to help them explore and manage their own thoughts and feelings.
- By putting extra support in with transition to their next school or college so that they feel as safe as possible around new adults and peers.
- By working closely with families to make sure we spot any concerns and celebrate successes.

Having read this, if you want to discuss your child further with us, please contact Mrs McFadyen on 0161 406 7922.



Highfields Inclusion Partnership



## A Quick Guide to Attachment-Focused Schooling

## What do we mean by 'attachment'?



Attachment Theory is an area of research into childhood. Researchers have found that the relationships we experience in **our first few years of life** can have a big impact as we get older.

Research has also found that the brain during **the teenage years** undergoes major changes. This is why teenagers are often overly-emotional and rebellious. However, it also gives us a 'window of opportunity' to reinforce good habits and reduce bad habits. This means the teenage years are an important stage of life in terms of learning how to be around other people.

It is worth pointing out also that changes to how we think, feel and act can still take place during adulthood - but at this point it will likely take longer.

## What do we mean by 'attachment concerns'?

Young people attend Highfields because their placement within a secondary school has broken down. This often involves them having conflict with adults and with other students.

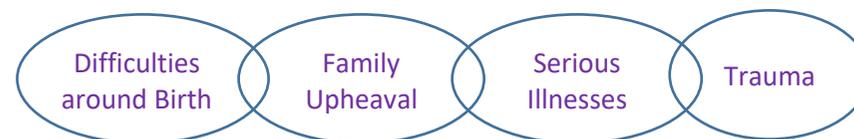
Every person is ultimately responsible for their actions – including young people. But we also know that people often make their choices based on previous experience.



***When we play a game of chess, we can only make our moves based on knowledge of what moves are available –and based on practise and experience of playing. Relationships are also like this.***

For some young people, they have experienced events where relationships have not gone the way we would like. This is not about blaming parents or carers, but about us understanding that we all have good & bad times - and these things can have a long-term effect.

Research has shown young people who have experienced any of the following in their family life may feel insecure in their relationships.



These experiences can make young people defensive and even hostile to adults.

***(Please turn over...)***