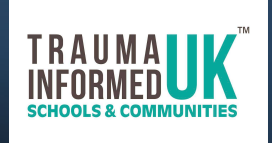


TISCUK YEF Project Report Summary



The trial examined the impact of TISCUK training on reducing externalising behaviour in young people. 78 secondary schools were randomised at the start of the trial and 73 of these remained in the project at the start of the delivery phase. Of these, 36 received TISCUK training and 37 acted as a comparison group which allowed the impact of the training to be compared to usual practice.

Training was delivered over four academic terms, however, in many cases this timeline was compressed due to recruitment, delayed randomisation and schools being unable to schedule staff training at short notice. As a result, for most schools, changes to practice and policies were largely implemented during the final two terms of the trial. 35 out of the 36 schools that began TISCUK training remained engaged throughout the study, with strong levels of participation despite the logistical demands of training large numbers of staff within a limited timeframe.

Qualitative findings from interviews and case studies were positive. In most schools, staff perceived the programme as essential rather than an optional extra and pupils recognised a difference in how teachers interacted with them and reported a wider network of approachable adults. TISCUK training was described as a ‘professional compass’ in demanding environments and many staff felt that it filled important gaps in their professional education. Across case studies, staff reported reductions in exclusions and serious behaviour escalations. Attendance at TISCUK training was generally high, although some schools reported difficulties due to operational pressures, lengthy sessions and staff turnover.

Unfortunately, endpoint data was only available for 31% of pupils who began the trial because a high number of schools did not complete surveys or provide administrative data. This substantially limits the strength of conclusions that can be drawn about pupil outcomes which is reflected in YEF’s security rating of the evaluation. Findings should therefore be treated with caution.



Although the trial has a low security rating, it did show a small positive impact on the primary outcome which was pupils' externalising behaviour and the data also indicated a significant positive impact on staff wellbeing, although this should be considered within the context of low survey response rates overall. The evaluation found that staff and pupils valued the approach and were beginning to see real positive changes in settings; with a longer timeframe to address logistical challenges and allow the approach to embed, we (TISCUK) predict that further impact would have been evident.

In addition to the above, the evaluation aimed to assess the impact on children receiving targeted support from newly qualified TISCUK practitioners in participating schools. However, this aspect was constrained by identification challenges and an inability to account for the direction of travel or rate of deterioration; as a result, firm conclusions about the effectiveness of this component could not be drawn.

This project has confirmed what we know; that it takes time to implement whole school cultural, policy and practice changes and for this to then impact pupil outcomes. As an organisation, we have learnt a lot about how implementation works best in these settings and the challenges of evaluating this type of work. The project found that achieving genuine organisational change required consistent leadership engagement and protected staff time, with more in-depth training being attended by both senior leaders and frontline staff.

This is one of the largest evaluations of school based trauma informed practice that has been undertaken. It was an ambitious project on a tight timeline in a context where mainstream secondary schools are under significant societal, staffing and funding pressures and where mental health issues in pupils are rising. We are incredibly grateful to YEF, the independent evaluators and the whole TISCUK team who made this possible as well as the schools that took part.