



# Warwickshire's Relational Practice Framework



# Why do we need a Practice Framework?

**A practice framework provides an evidence-based structure within which knowledge, learning, and good practice can be shared. It offers a common language to communicate across teams and enables practitioners to further explore the theories and approaches that shape their work.**

Warwickshire's Relational Practice Framework also represents a collaborative approach to working with children and families by Warwickshire County Council and its partners, supporting the delivery of the county's Families First approach.

This framework is used across the multi-agency partners to ensure that delivery of a Child Friendly Warwickshire where every child and young person is happy, healthy, heard, safe, and skilled. It is a reminder of the collective responsibility to ensure that services are doing the right thing, in the right way, for the right reasons. As the needs of children and families evolve and they move between different services and organisations, this embedded Relational Practice Framework ensures coherence and consistency in how practitioners engage and work with them.

This work is complex and wide-ranging, and this framework helps to 'centre' our services. It aligns the diverse work across the partnership within a shared set of theories which explain, why we do what we do, how we safeguard children and young people, and what underpins our values, principles, and beliefs, ensuring that all actions are grounded in our mission to empower and support families effectively.

Furthermore, the framework articulates to the outside world what it means to be a part of Warwickshire's Families First Approach; attracting practitioners who are interested in the way we work and have the right outlook and skills to be part of our journey. Practice frameworks are often described as merging the 'science' and 'art' of working with children and families. The 'science' represents the evidence base that informs our work, while the 'art' is the unique value each practitioner brings—their expertise, experience, values, and insights. Together, these elements bring the Warwickshire Relational Practice Framework to life.

# For Warwickshire to be truly child friendly, we believe that every child and young person should:



## **BE HEARD**

Have a voice to shape where they live and what is important to them



## **BE SAFE**

Having secure and stable home lives



## **BE HEALTHY**

Have access to the health services and physical activity they need



## **BE SKILLED**

The opportunity to enjoy the learning they need – leading to the employment they want



## **BE HAPPY**

Having access to safe, secure and clean activities and entertainment

# What is our Warwickshire Families First approach?

## Locality Working

Supporting families in their communities. Building strong partnerships with local services, including the Voluntary and Community Sector.

## Multi-Disciplinary Teams

Supporting the whole family with the services they need. These include services from Health, Police and Education.

## Multi Agency Safeguarding Arrangements

Clear and shared arrangements for safeguarding children and young people between Children's Services, Health, Police, Education and other key agencies and organisations.

## Multi Agency Group Supervisions

Multi agency group supervision engages all professionals to collaboratively develop a clear understanding of needs and share accountability in decision-making.

## Warwickshire's Relational Practice Framework

A relational framework, used across the partnership to support children and families and to ensure that every child and young person should be heard, safe, healthy, skilled and happy.



# Warwickshire's Relational Practice Framework enables us to deliver a Child Friendly Warwickshire:

## Why

Why we do what we do in practice

WARWICKSHIRE  
**Families  
First**

## What

The tools and techniques to deliver best practice

## How

- Restorative Practice
- Trauma and Attachment Aware Practice
- Within a context of Safe Uncertainty
- Utilising the Strength of Family



# Warwickshire's Relational Practice Framework

## Why

**We believe that change is most effective in the context of relationships**

- Relationship based practice gets the best results for families; our commitment for working **with** not for or to them
- Support and help should recognise the diversity, social inequalities and the uniqueness of families
- We can't work with families effectively on our own – we have a shared commitment to help families within multi agency context
- Support and help comes with power, privilege and bias and help needs to consider the lived experience of children and families
- Legislation and research says families should remain within their family network where it is safe to do so and is in the child's best interests
- Eliminating risk isn't possible, the best that we can do is work towards 'safe uncertainty'
- We bring ourselves to our work with children and families: we are proactive in understanding the awareness of ourselves, our values and our lived experiences in our relationships with families
- We are committed to making anywhere children spend time (in person or online) safer

## How

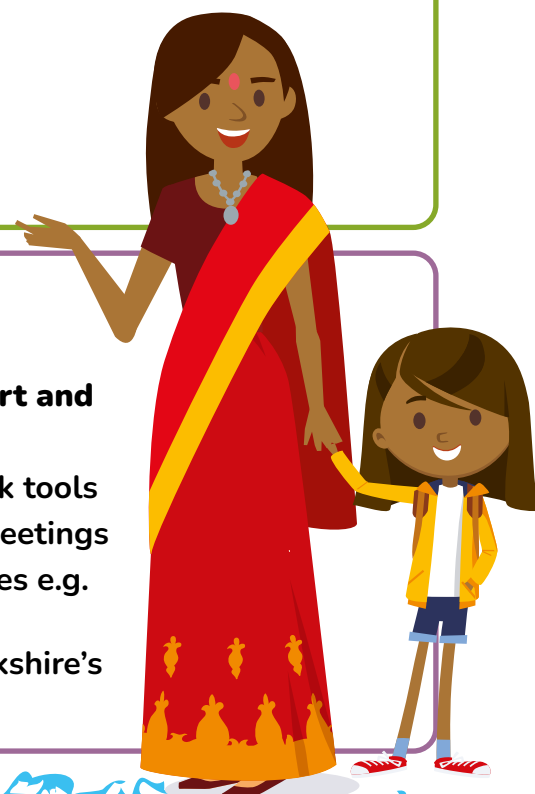
**We will adopt a relationship-based practice framework of these four practice elements:**

- Utilising the strength of family
- Restorative Practice
- Within a context of safe uncertainty to risk
- Trauma and Attachment Aware Practice

## What

**We will effectively identify tools and techniques to support and help families:**

- Working with children and young people e.g. direct work tools
- Working with parents and carers e.g. Family Network Meetings
- Working with each other/colleagues and partner agencies e.g. health and police
- Working with best practice e.g. commitment to Warwickshire's five principles of good practice



# Why we do what we do in practice in Warwickshire

## Why

We believe that change is the most effective in the context of relationships

Relationship based practice gets the best results for families; our commitment for working **with** not for or to them

Support and help should recognise the diversity, social inequalities and the uniqueness of families

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Legislation and research says families should remain together wherever possible and is in the child's best interest

Eliminating risk isn't possible, the best that we can do is work towards 'safe uncertainty'

We bring ourselves, our values and our lived experiences to the relationship and the way we work with families

We are committed to making anywhere children spend time (in person or online) safer

# The four practice elements

How

A relational practice framework helps to establish a structure in which we share best practice, knowledge and learning based on the best evidence available.

We believe that to achieve a Child Friendly Warwickshire, we need a relational based practice framework which supports the uniqueness of every family based on these four practice elements:

Utilising the strength of family

Restorative Practice

Within a context of safe uncertainty to risk

Trauma and Attachment Aware Practice





# Utilising the strengths of family

## **Family based decision making:**

Family Network Meetings (FNM) are a collaborative process designed to empower families in making decisions about the care and protection of their children. Keeping the child's safety and welfare as the central focus.

This is a whole system offer.

## **Communicating with and listening to children, young people and their families to ensure their voice is heard**

Always ensure the child remains at the centre of our thinking.

## **Multi agency working**

Multi agency working enables wider conversation and understanding of individuals and families' strengths.

## **Appreciating whole lives and communities**

Recognising the diversity and uniqueness of individuals, families and communities.

## **Families are the expert in their own lives**

Recognises that with the right support, families are often better equipped than external professionals to develop sustainable solutions for the well-being of children.

Working **with** families is essential. The 'Pathway to Change' is a valuable tool to support this.

# Restorative Practice

Restorative practice is a term used to describe how we work with children, young people, and families, how we lead our teams, collaborate with our colleagues, and support our professional partners which emphasises three key things:

**Working with people and building strong working relationships**

**We believe** that better outcomes will happen if we work alongside people, rather than doing things to them, doing things for them or just not doing them at all. Restorative Practice is about what we do daily to invest in people and how we intentionally build connections with one another.

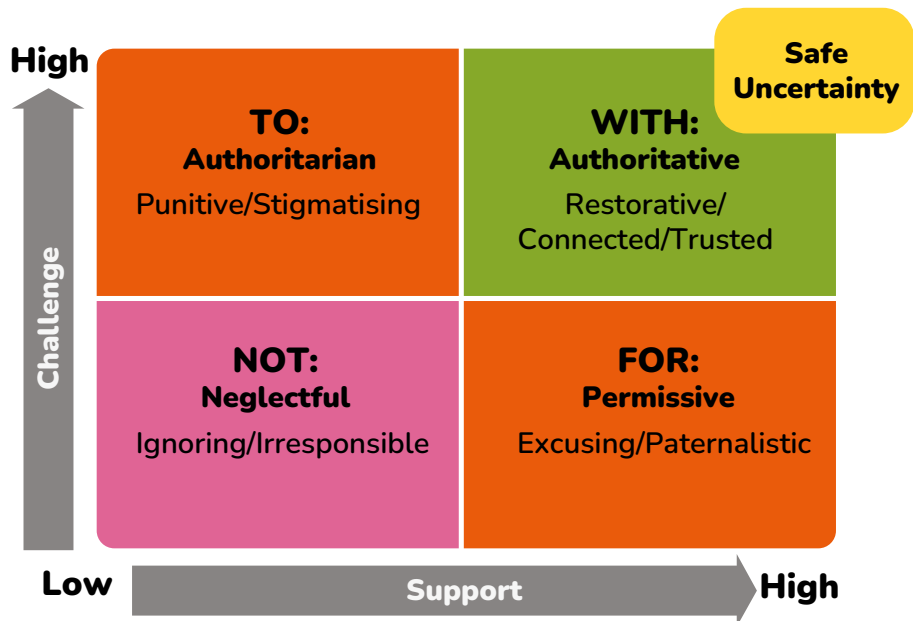
**Respectful support and challenge**

**We believe** that everyone deserves a fair process. Offering respectful support and challenge we will work with children and families, encouraging family-based decision making. Working together to empower children and families to create their best family plans.

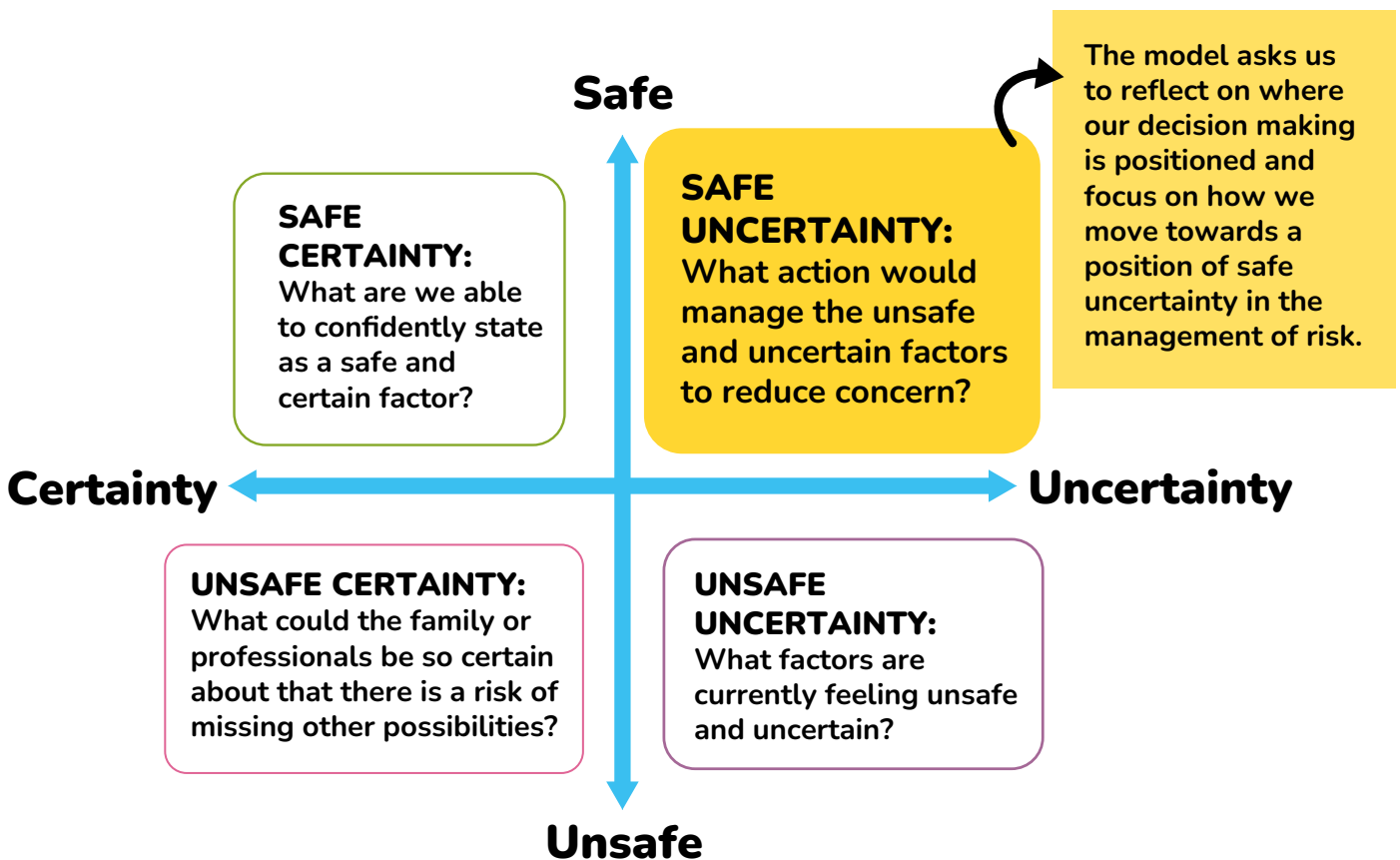
**Families are experts in their own lives**

**We recognise** that families are the experts in their own lives, and we need to work with families to help turn this expertise into the solutions needed. Done well, Restorative Practice develops, strengthens, and restores relationships and ensures everyone's voice is heard.

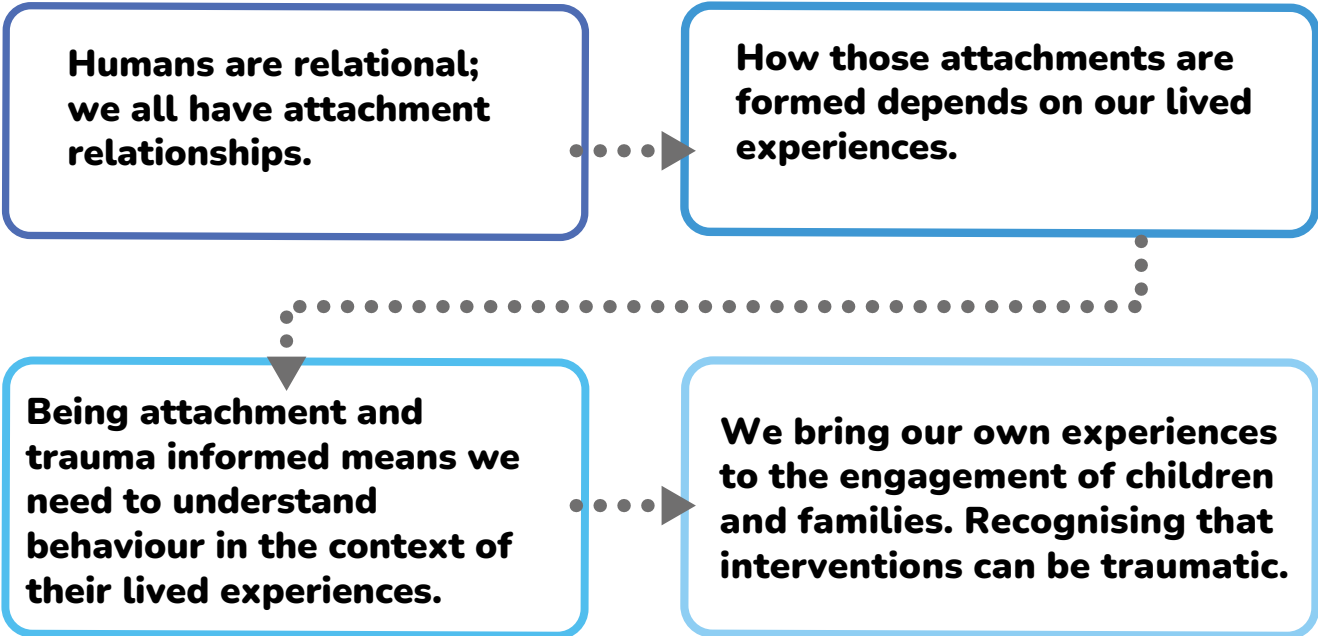
## Social Discipline Window



# Within a context of safe uncertainty to risk

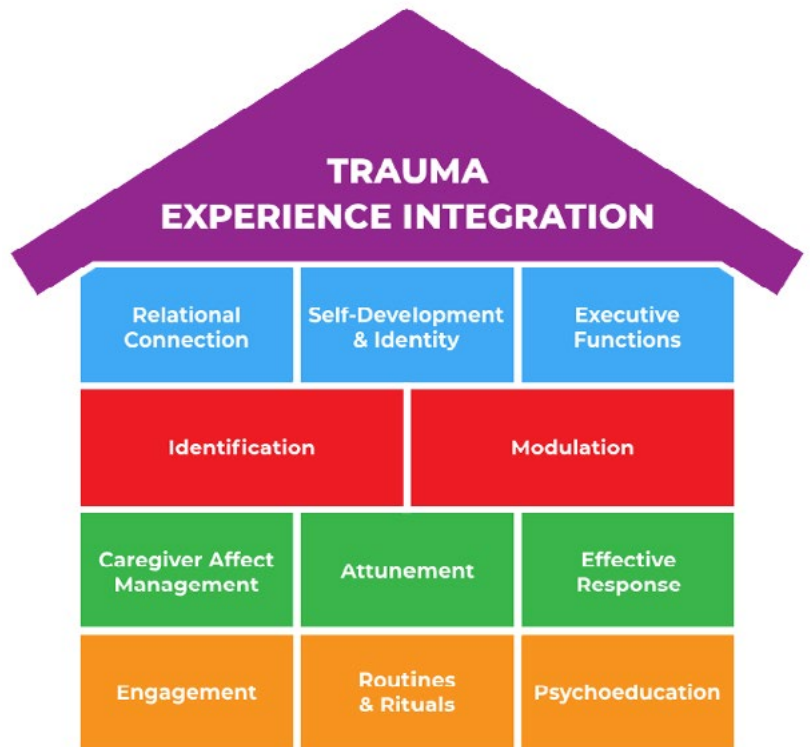


# Trauma and Attachment Aware Practice



Within Warwickshire we will utilise the Attachment, Regulation and Competency (ARC) Framework. The ARC Framework is a flexible, components-based intervention developed for children who have experienced trauma, along with their caregiving systems.

Alongside ARC, Dyadic Developmental Practice (DDP), Theraplay, and Solihull Approach are also utilised to deliver Trauma and Attachment Aware Practice.



**A**ttachment **R**egulation **C**ompetency

# The tools and techniques to deliver best practice

What

Working with children and young people

Working with parents and carers

Working with each other/ colleagues and partner agencies

Working with best practice

Every aspect of our practice is grounded in the importance of relationships, ensuring that children's circumstances are improved through genuine relational engagement.

It ensures that we are working with the same values and principles and provides a shared language for practitioners which helps us to collaborate more effectively across services and agencies involved in a child's care and protection.

## Warwickshire's five principles of good practice



**Voice of the child** - children are heard, listened to and taken account of - the age of the child is not a barrier.



**Chronologies and recording** are clear and up to date, giving a real feel for the journey of the child.



**Outcome focused SMART plans** - be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, time limited.



**Family and network based decision making** - empowering families in making decisions around care and protection of their children in collaborative Family Network Meetings.



**Management oversight and supervision** - workers do not support alone, teams take joint responsibility and supervision is relational, regular, supportive and reflective.

# Examples of tools and techniques to deliver best practice

What

Pathway to Change	Safe uncertainty grid	Neglect toolkit	Direct Work Toolkit	Brook Traffic Light Toolkit	Solihull Approach
Non Violent Resistance	Family Network Meeting	Direct Work baskets	Three Houses	Attachment Regulation Competency (ARC)	Outcome focused SMART plans
Recording: Writing to the Child	Chronologies	Genograms (social and community)	Management Oversight	Supervision	Motivational interviewing
Assessments	Solution focused	Therapeutic Parenting techniques	Change balloons	Theraplay	Lifestory Work
Parental Conflict	Solution Circles	<b>You</b>		Parenting Apart Plan	Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ)
Systemic	Dyadic Developmental Practice (DDP)			Sibling Assessments	Consultations
Family Pack of questionnaires	Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews	Contextual Safeguarding	Assessment Toolkit	Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) Response Pathway	Audits
Supervision	Healthy Relationship work	Domestic Abuse Risk Assessment	Incredible Years	Language/ Communication	Return Home Assessment
Placement Stability meeting	Rapid Reviews	Children and Families Assessments	Parenting Assessments	Access and Inclusion Model (AIM)	Family Network Support Packages
Team Around the Child	Protective Behaviours	Youth Work Framework			

All of these and more are available on the [Direct Work Hub](#)



**WHY we do what we do in practice:**

**How: Our four practice elements:**

**What: the tools and techniques of how we can achieve best practice**



The Warwickshire Families First approach is endorsed by the Warwickshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership and involves agencies across the county working together to help children and young people be heard, safe, healthy, skilled and happy.



[www.childfriendlywarwickshire.co.uk](http://www.childfriendlywarwickshire.co.uk)

