A whole school based community development model: The Academic Resilience Approach

Professor Angie Hart

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Centre for Health Research, School of Health Sciences, University of Brighton & Boingboing for resilience research and practice

Background

* 10% of UK's child & adolescent population have clinically diagnosed mental health problems.

* Child & adolescent mental health services is in crisis.

* Promoting resilience, prevention and early intervention is one of the key areas in current policy.

Future in mind

Promoting, protecting and improving our children and young people's mental health and wellbeing

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Early intervention matters

Half of lifetime cases of diagnosable mental illnesses begin between the ages of 5 &16

Only **less than 50%** are treated appropriately at the time

Economic returns of early childhood intervention programmes exceed cost by an average ratio of 1:6

The total annual cost of mental health problems in the UK exceeds **£100 billion**

In an average class of 30 15-year-old pupils

3 could have a mental disorder

health

10 are likely to have witnessed their parents separate

1 could have experienced death of a parent

7 are likely to have been bullied
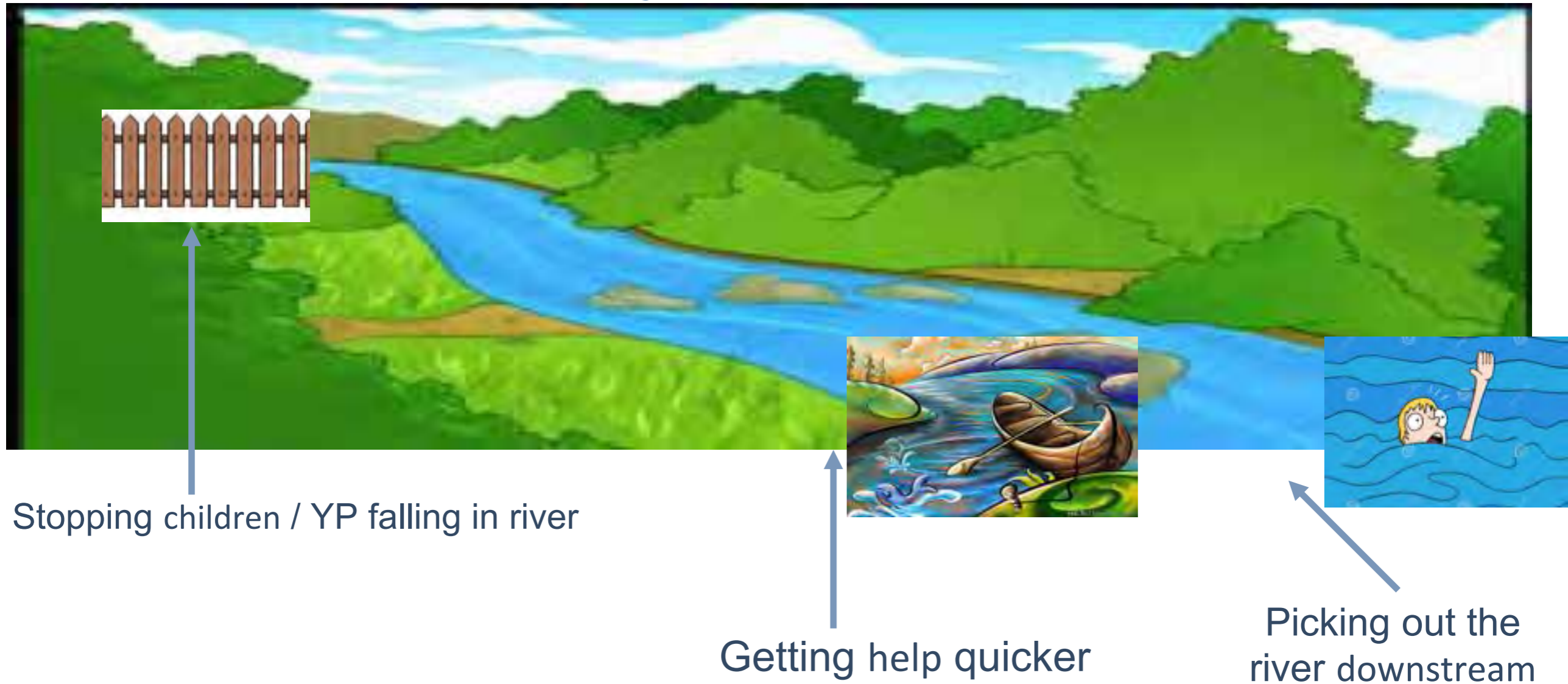
6 may be self-harming

10%

70%

10% of children and young people (aged 5-16 years) have a clinically diagnosable mental health problem, yet 70% of children and adolescents who experience mental health problems have not had appropriate interventions at a sufficiently early age.

(Children's Society, 2008)

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Mental health services and resilience

Prevention…………...……..Early intervention…….……Specialist services

Stopping children / YP falling in river

Getting help quicker

Picking out the river downstream

Resilience - children enabled to swim

School Context

✣ Schools have greatest access to children and young people and therefore the opportunity to have enormous impact on their mental health.

✣ However, many school-based resilience, prevention and early intervention programmes lack effectiveness and are difficult to sustain.

There is a need for whole school approaches

How schools can help...

❖ a committed Senior LeadershipTeam (SLT): creating a culture in school that values all pupils; allows a sense of belonging; and makes it possible to talk about problems

❖ an ethos of high expectations of attainment for all pupils: clear policies on behaviour and bullying set out the responsibilities of everyone in the school

❖ an effective role for special educational needs coordinators (SENCOs), ensuring all adults understand responsibilities

❖ working with parents and carers and pupils, ensuring their opinions are taken into account and they participate in decisions taken about them

❖ continuous professional development for staff promoting good mental health is the responsibility of all members of school staff. Knowing how to spot the signs

❖ clear systems and processes to identify children with possible mental health problems. Clear referral and accountability systems. Schools should work closely with other professionals to have a range of support services

❖ clear cycle of support: an assessment to establish a clear analysis of the pupil's needs; a plan to set out how the pupil will be supported; action to provide that support; and regular reviews to assess the effectiveness of the provision

❖ a healthy school approach to promoting the health and wellbeing of all pupils in the school, priorities identified and a clear process of 'planning, doing and reviewing'.

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How schools can help…

how schools can help
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=du8lkH-HNnw

- ❖ Research tells us that applying the resilience approach to a whole school will be more sustainable
- ❖ Planning ahead to ensure students can be resilient is more effective
- ❖ Everyone in the school has the power to make resilient moves
- ❖ Finding our who is vulnerable is very important
- ❖ Capturing information about students and knowing how to us the the information is important
- ❖ Finding out what staff, pupils and parents think is also crucial
- ❖ Thinking creatively using the Resilience Framework

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✤ The **Academic Resilience Approach (ARA)** is strategic planning and practice that involves the whole school community to help vulnerable young people do better than their circumstances might have predicted

✤ *a key for sustainability of resilience mechanisms*
✤ *Has a freely available web-version*
✤ *Facilitation of the approach can be commissioned from Boingboing*

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The Academic Resilience Approach was devised by Lisa Williams and Professor Angie Hart with input from other individuals and organisations especially YoungMinds, Hove Park School and Eleanor Smith School.

It has been adopted by YoungMinds and other organisations, including schools in Durham and Bedford.

The ARA is based on Professor Hart's collaborative resilience work at the University of Brighton and boingboing.

Resilience Framework (Children & Young People) Oct 2012 – adapted from Hart & Blincow with Thomas 2007

SPECIFIC APPROACHES	BASICS	BELONGING	LEARNING	COPING	CORE SELF
	Good enough housing	Find somewhere for the child/YP to belong	Make school/college life work as well as possible	Understanding boundaries and keeping within them	Instil a sense of hope
		Help child/YP understand their place in the world		Being brave	
	Enough money to live	Tap into good influences	Engage mentors for children/YP	Solving problems	Support the child/YP to understand other people's feelings
	Being safe	Keep relationships going			
		The more healthy relationships the better	Map out career or life plan	Putting on rose-tinted glasses	Help the child/YP to know her/himself
	Access & transport	Take what you can from relationships where there is some hope		Fostering their interests	
	Healthy diet	Get together people the child/YP can count on	Help the child/YP to organise her/himself	Calming down & self-soothing	Help the child/YP take responsibility for her/himself
		Responsibilities & obligations			
	Exercise and fresh air	Focus on good times and places	Highlight achievements	Remember tomorrow is another day	Foster their talents
	Enough sleep	Make sense of where child/YP has come from		Lean on others when necessary	
	Play & leisure Being free from prejudice & discrimination	Predict a good experience of someone or something new	Develop life skills	Have a laugh	There are tried and tested treatments for specific problems, use them
		Make friends and mix with other children/YPs			

NOBLE TRUTHS

ACCEPTING	CONSERVING	COMMITMENT	ENLISTING

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Wade

Free, practical resources to help everyone in the school community step up and support pupils' academic resilience.

Our resources:

• Help any school establish systems to build 'resilience approaches' that support disadvantaged pupils over time through a whole school approach
• Will benefit all pupils from a school-wide approach to increasing academic resilience
• Raise achievement
• Offer 'quick wins' that can be implemented immediately
• Help identify pupils who are at risk of not fulfilling their academic potential
• Provide practical approaches to help pupils do better than might be expected
• Offer ideas to help everyone in the school community play a part.

All our resources are based on research evidence and practice. One Head teacher involved in developing Academic Resilience uses a famous quote from NASA to illustrate the idea of a whole school approach:

Resilience Forum

COPs and Social Learning Theory
Friday 30 June - FREE
1.15pm – 3.00pm
Brunswick, Central Library,
Queen Street, Blackpool

Training

Blackpool
Free 2hr intro to resilience
Thur 27 Apr - Free

Intro to Resilient Therapy
Mon 15 May - Free/£120

Practitioner resilience
Tue 16 May - Free/£120

Understanding the Academic
Resilience Approach
Fri 5 May - Free/£120

More workshops...

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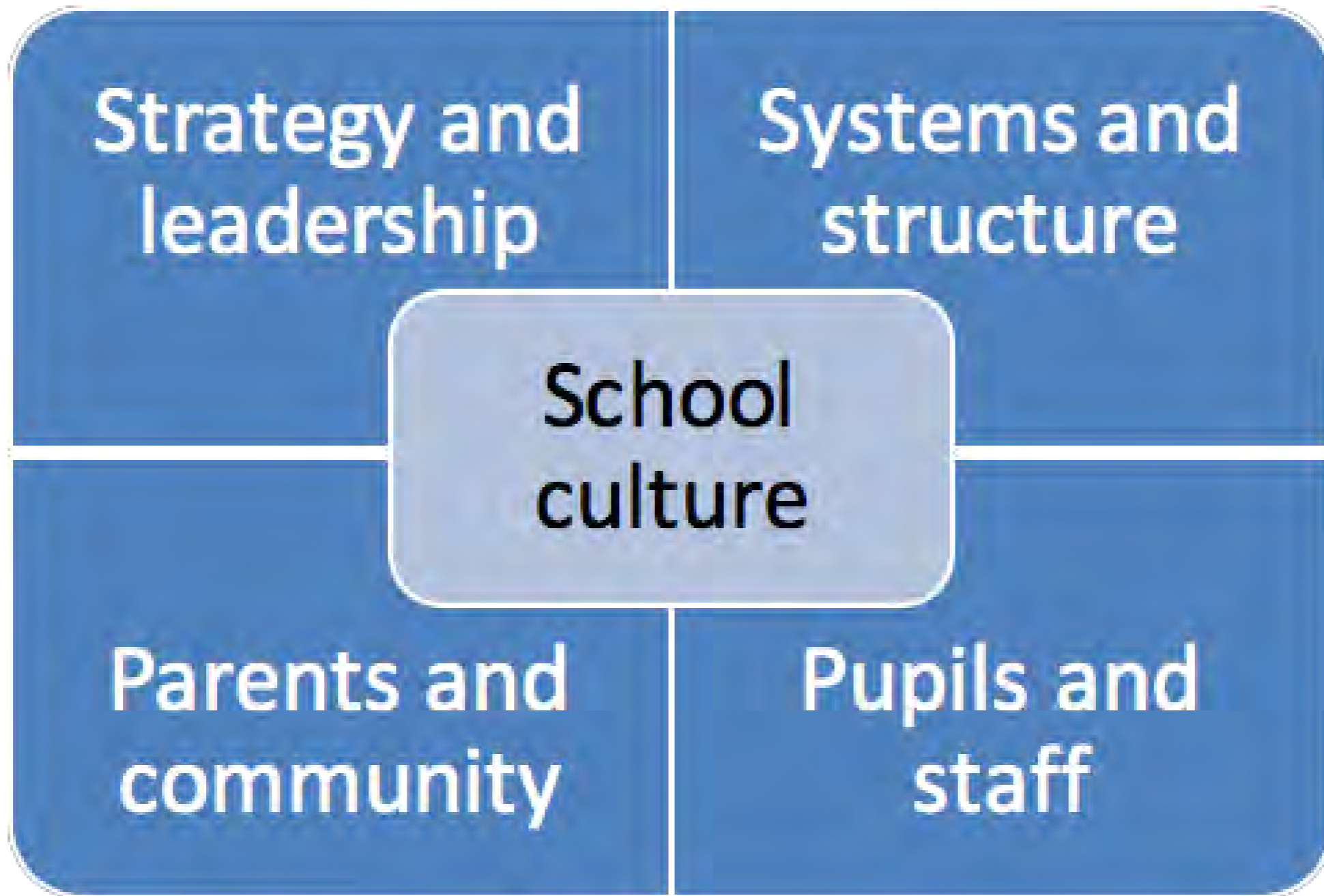resilience research and practice

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The ARA intervention

Based on complex systems theory and a social justice oriented resilience framework

A whole school based community development model

Identifies multiple resilience building mechanisms that are applicable in multiple contexts with students

Whole school community & whole organisation approach.....

The school as a complex system of interacting elements making up the whole
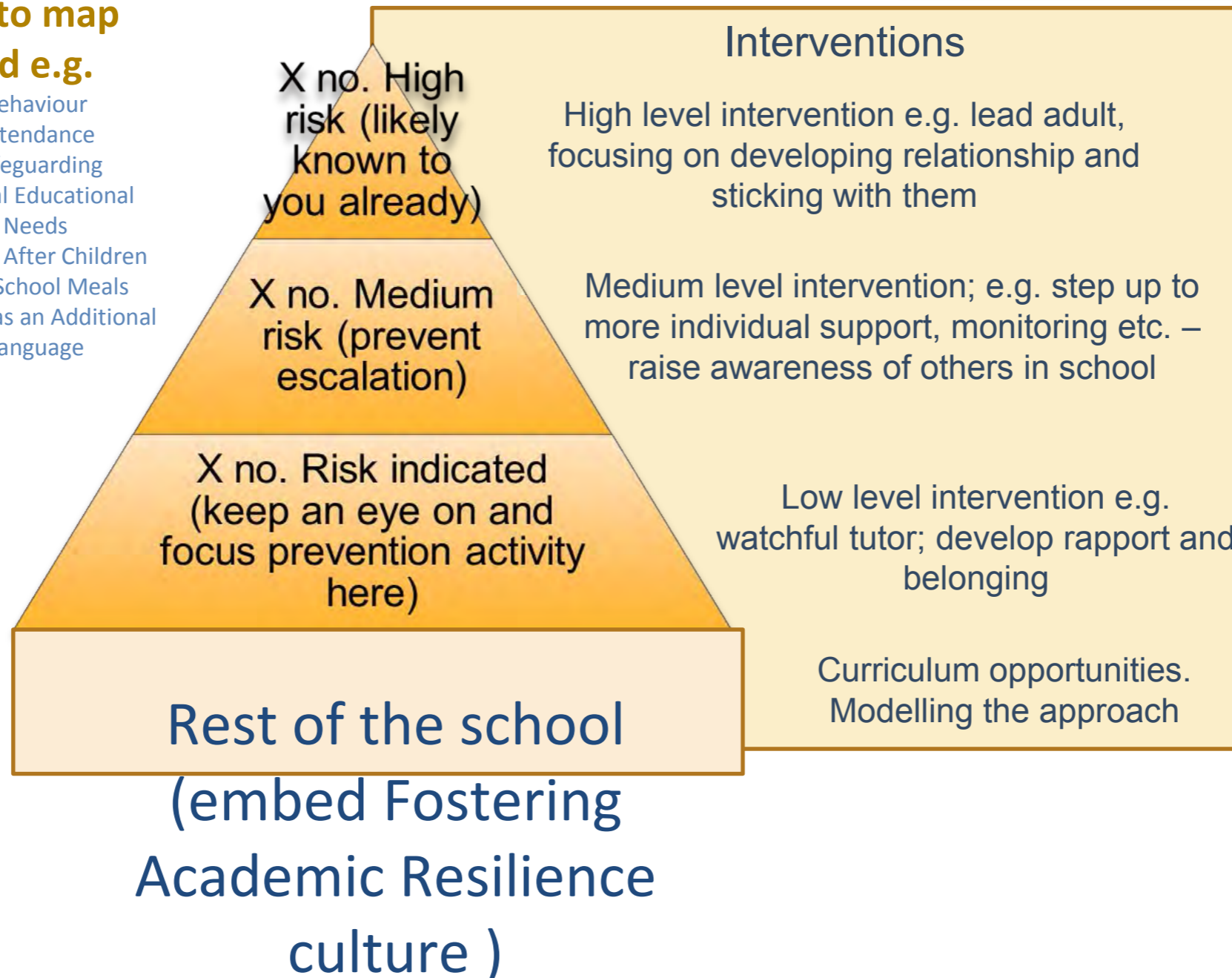
The steps of the ARA are:

✤ Initial senior leadership team meeting

✤ Staff workshops/training on resilience

✤ School audits with staff, senior management, students and parents

✤ Development of action plans based on intelligence derived from above steps

✤ Implementation of action plans and review through further training and consultancy

- ❖ Behaviour
- ❖ Attendance
- ❖ Safeguarding
- ❖ Special Educational Needs
- ❖ Looked After Children
- ❖ Free School Meals
- ❖ English as an Additional Language

Academic Resilience
Beating the odds for better results

X no. High risk (likely known to you already)

X no. Medium risk (prevent escalation)

X no. Risk indicated (keep an eye on and focus prevention activity here)

Rest of the school (embed Fostering Academic Resilience culture)

Interventions

High level intervention e.g. lead adult, focusing on developing relationship and sticking with them

Medium level intervention; e.g. step up to more individual support, monitoring etc. – raise awareness of others in school

Low level intervention e.g. watchful tutor; develop rapport and belonging

Curriculum opportunities. Modelling the approach

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Durham Resilience Project

Aim:

To establish a sustainable approach to building resilience of the whole school community (drawing on the ARA), which in turn will influence the behavioural, academic and wellbeing outcomes of pupils in schools.

Overall, the aim is to help more vulnerable young people thrive in spite of adverse circumstances, thus reducing educational inequality.

Who?

All schools in a county called Durham in the North of England were invited to participate (primary, secondary and special education settings). At present around 34 schools are part of the project with more signing up. The area has a higher level of 'disadvantaged' students (including SEND, low SES)

How?

Educational Psychologists from the local county who already know the schools are delivering training to all school staff based on the freely available Academic Resilience resources through 'twilight' training sessions.

Audits of existing school practice are then carried out with reference to resilience framework identifying priorities for an action plan which develops existing practice and includes a set of strategy and policy changes bespoke to each education setting. The Educational Psychologists then act as facilitators to guide the progress of the project and capture data as it progresses.

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Durham Resilience Project Evaluation

The DRP is being evaluated by a team at Brighton University who are sharing their findings with facilitators and school staff in Durham.

The DRP evaluation is part of the Imagine project

❖ Overall aims of the evaluation are

❖ A) to consider the extent to which the ARA has contributed to the capacity building and sustainability of good practice across the multiple levels of the system

❖ B) To explore the extent to which resilience of the whole school community increases, and the impact this may have on measurable pupil outcomes

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Durham Resilience Project Evaluation

❖ **Data which will be collected throughout the DRP evaluation:**

❖ Pupil and staff demographics

❖ Pupil resilience survey

❖ Staff school climate survey

❖ School Audits and Action plans

❖ Facilitator interviews

❖ School staff interviews

❖ Focus group interviews

❖ Pupil attendance, staff absence, exclusion rates, referral rates and academic data

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Durham Resilience Project Evaluation Contd.

Although there is widespread support for a whole school approach to reducing inequality and fostering mental health, many programmes are found to be overly reliant on funding, resources and extenal practitioners, threatening their sustainability.

The DRP is unique as it is a self facilitated project un reliant on external providers and additional funding.

This evaluation will use mixed methods and the Value Creation Framework to tell the story of change across multiple system levels as a result of the ARA

Staff Perspectives of the ARA

❖ As part of the overall DRP evaluation, it is important to understand how staff perceptions of the ARA in specific contexts shapes both delivery and outcomes of the programme

❖ Therefore, whilst the overall evaluation looks at pupil outcomes, a separate study will consider staff experiences of the ARA

❖ MRC guidelines suggests that involving stakeholders in the evaluation of a complex intervention will provide 'better, more relevant science and a higher chance of producing implementable data'(Craig et al., 2006 p.15). MRC guidelines suggest using a process analysis, employing mixed methods and detailed case studies

❖ A mixed method, multiple case study design is being used to gather staff perspectives of the ARA, and consider findings from a systems perspective (understanding that staff and the schools they belong to are part of complex social systems)

Emerging data of the ARA in the DRP

❖ Discussions with facilitators (Educational Psychologists) suggest that **current local impact of national budget cuts** (including potential redundancies and resulting teaching assistant strike action) has presented significant adversity for staff, making the ARA timely and relevant for staff

❖ In some schools, the **ARA has a strong focus emerging from contextual need**. For example, in one school the facilitator reports that the insular nature of the local community can prevent young people accessing opportunities on offer county wide. A scheme has been set up where local schools offer free extra curricular activity sharing run by parents and carers who, prior to the ARA were seen as unsupportive of school in general by school staff. The facilitator reports that parents, staff and students are communicating more openly and with a shared goal of resilience building

❖ In other schools, staff are planning to use the **ARA to reinvent school ethos**, drawing together the often competing aims of academic and pastoral development

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The Staff Perceptions of School Climate Survey (SPSC)

❖ At this stage **all staff in all schools have completed the SPSC survey** combining three existing scales that measure organisational climate from staff perspectives (Social Capital Scale(Onyx & Bullen, 2000), Health Promoting Schools (Lemerle, 2005), School Organisational Health Questionnaire (Hart et al, 2000))

❖ The survey has nine subscales exploring staff perceptions (via a self report likert-type scale) of school climate including leadership, workload, morale, peer support and connection community partners

❖ The survey will be repeated at the end of the ARA in order to see if the organisational climate acted as a facilitator or barrier to ARA implementation, and also to see if any change in staff perception occurs as a result of the ARA

❖ In addition to the survey – interviews are carried out once a term with facilitators in each school and with a sub sample of leaders, teachers and non teaching staff in case study schools.

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Staff Survey Results

❖ Early data analysis indicates **that primary schools tend to score higher than secondary schools** overall and that smaller schools also tend to score more positively, possibly due to higher staff student ratio and increased pastoral focus

❖ **Leadership** appears to be influential to overall survey scores– for most schools there is a significant difference between the views of leaders. Where there is less difference – overall scores for the survey are higher suggesting **greater coherence of staff perspectives**.

❖ For most schools, the highest scores were returned for a subscale measuring **communication** (including *staff support*, *communication and co-operation* and a subscale measuring *work connection* (including feeling as though **colleagues were friends, work satisfaction** and **feeling valued** at work)

❖ Since most schools in this area have a higher than average intake of students with SEND and from areas of socio-economic deprivation, data suggests that **even where adversity for students is high and workload for staff is high, organisational climate can still be perceived as high if staff feel supported by and connected to one another and to a shared vision**.

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Staff Survey Results contd.

❖ Across all schools, significantly lower scores were returned in the subscale that measured *workload* reflecting national (and international) concerns

❖ The second lowest subscale for most schools was **participative decision making,** and in particular the extent to which staff feel leadership allow them to contribute to whole school policy and procedures

❖ These results indicate that by **distributing power beyond leadership teams and reduce workload** (particularly work that is seen as less meaningful), organisational climate including **staff morale is likely to increase.**

❖ Since we already know that staff and student wellbeing and outcomes are interrelated (Malmberg & Hagger, 2009; Moolenaar, 2010; Pianta & Stuhlman, 2004; Roth et al., 2007; Covell et al, 2009), this may suggest **that outcomes for young people can be raised by tackling these aspects of staff experience**

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Examples of actual delivery/changes

❖ Primary Vulnerability Register template – resulting in structured delivery – universal and targeted

❖ Resilience/well being weeks – using Resilient classroom resources (adapted)

❖ Building resilience lens into planning – class and individual levels

❖ Co-production with parents – parents place, better use of family workers, proactive family support, parent led projects

❖ Improved transition planning – for children moving to and from Pupil Referal Units (PRU) and vulnerable children moving schools (and their families)

❖ Changed behaviour policies

❖ Change in school day

❖ Extra staff capacity

❖ Evaluation measures - school behaviour database, resilience walks through school

What the children say….

"The teaching assistant at my school knew me really well. She could tell when I was upset even if I didn't say anything"

"I always go to Miss Barratt. She's really easy to talk to and it's like she knows how I feel"

"I know it's weird but I got on best with Mr Smith 'cause he didn't teach me. We just talked about computer games and stuff"

"When I'd had a really bad morning I'd come in and Miss would just give me a massive smile, like she was really pleased to see me"

"I always liked seeing Mr Jones because he liked football too, and he came to watch me play after school sometimes"
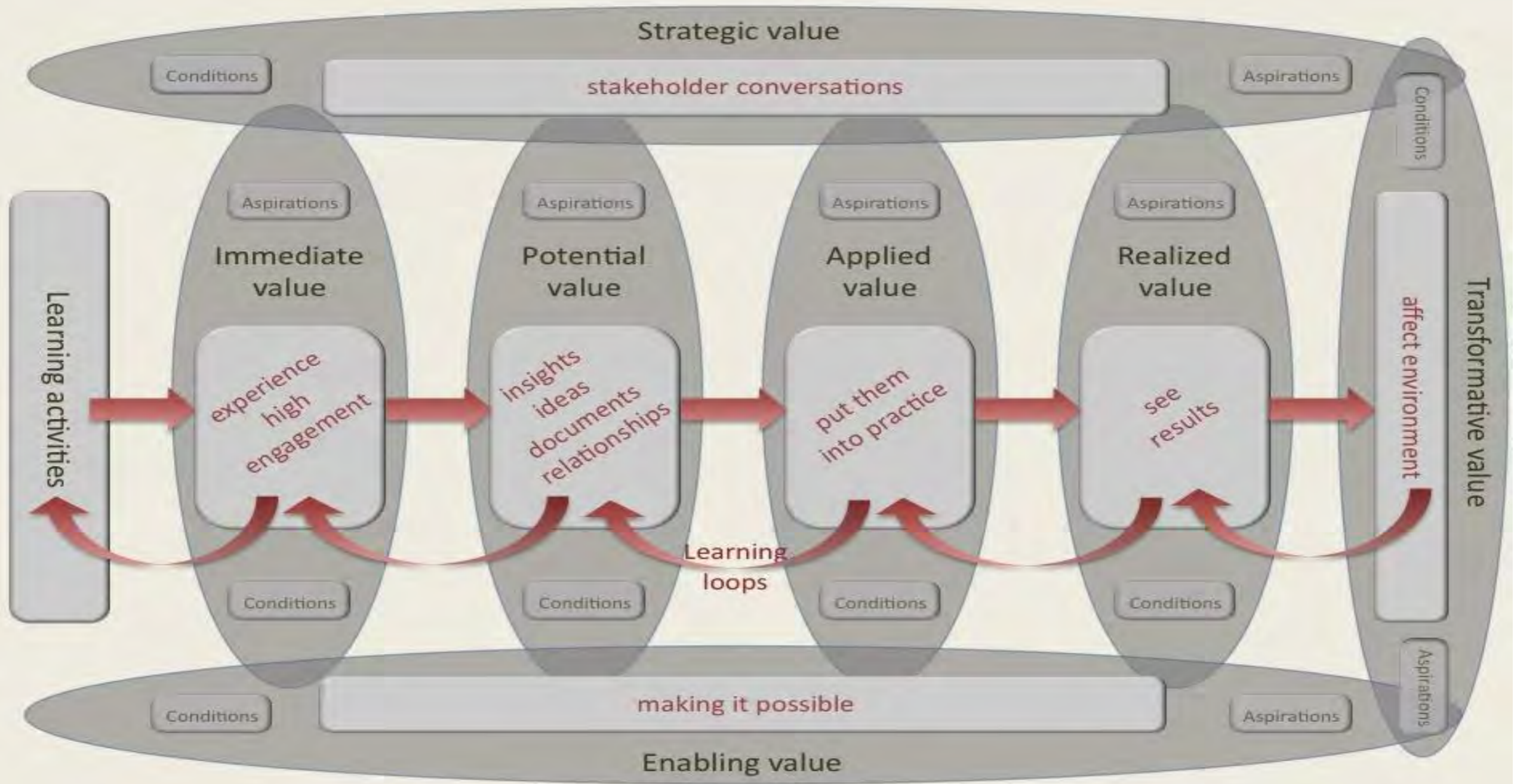
Evaluation of the ARA

Using a mixed-methods longitudinal design, we are exploring:
Process
Sustainability (e.g. capacity building)
Student outcomes
System outcomes
Economic outcomes

Value Creation Framework

How social learning creates value

Staff Perspectives

PhD study by Josie Maitland of staff perceptions of the ARA intervention

Literature demonstrates teachers 'special role' in the potential to change outcomes for children *and* to influence the efficacy of interventions designed to support children

Key questions (from staff perspectives):
1) What aspects of the school system helped or hindered ARA?
2) To what extent did ARA change organisational school practice?
3) What was the impact on leadership in the school?

Mixed method

Systems theory lens

Believe in the almost impossible!!

Thank You!

Contacts and websites

- Website: www.boingboing.org.uk
- Boingboing training details available on our website: http://www.boingboing.org.uk/index.php/training
- Short film on resilience Tedex:http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XPUzjyAoOK4
- Various films on resilience including one on systems http://www.youngminds.org.uk/training_services/head_start/resources

Resources and information available at:

http://www.boingboing.org.uk/index.php/resilience-in-practice/ara