Social and Emotional Learning Quality Education for the Twenty first Century

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Outline

▸ **Do we need SEL?**

▸ **Does it work?**

▸ **How does it work?**

▸ **What is the way foreward?**

▸ **Are there any side effects?**

Reality is changing for many children today

▸ Many children come to school
with a heavy baggage

From a **life of tests** to the **tests of life**

"We need to prepare our children for the 'tests of life' rather than burdening them with a 'life of tests'"

(Elias, 2010)

Tests of life: Self/Others

Social & Emotional Education

Self-Management
Managing emotions and behaviors to achieve one's goals

Self-Awareness
Recognizing one's emotions and values as well as one's strengths and challenges

Social Awareness
Showing understanding and empathy for others

Responsible Decision-Making
Making ethical, constructive choices about personal and social behavior

Relationship Skills
Forming positive relationships, working in teams, dealing effectively with conflict

Social & Emotional Learning

CASEL

But does SEE work?

NESET II

Cefai, Bartolo, Cavioni, Downes (2018)

Strenghtening Social and Emotional Education as a core curricular area across the EU

A Review of the International Evidence

Methodology

METHODOLOGY:

- Review of international research, including in-depth analysis of 14 major reviews, additional reviews, studies, and research reports, amongst them several from Europe (screened for quality and reliability)

- Report focused on studies, particularly reviews of studies, of universal school-based SEL, but excluded targeted interventions, evaluations of health promotion, citizenship

IMPACT

- Increase in SE competences
- Increase in prosocial attitudes and behavior
- Increase in academic learning
- Decrease in negative behaviours: anti-social behavior, delinquency, anxiety and depression
- Modest effect sizes (0.17 to 0.57) but comparable/ higher than those of other psychosocial interventions
- Effective across school years, especially in early years, and across geographical setting (urban/rural), SES or ethnicity
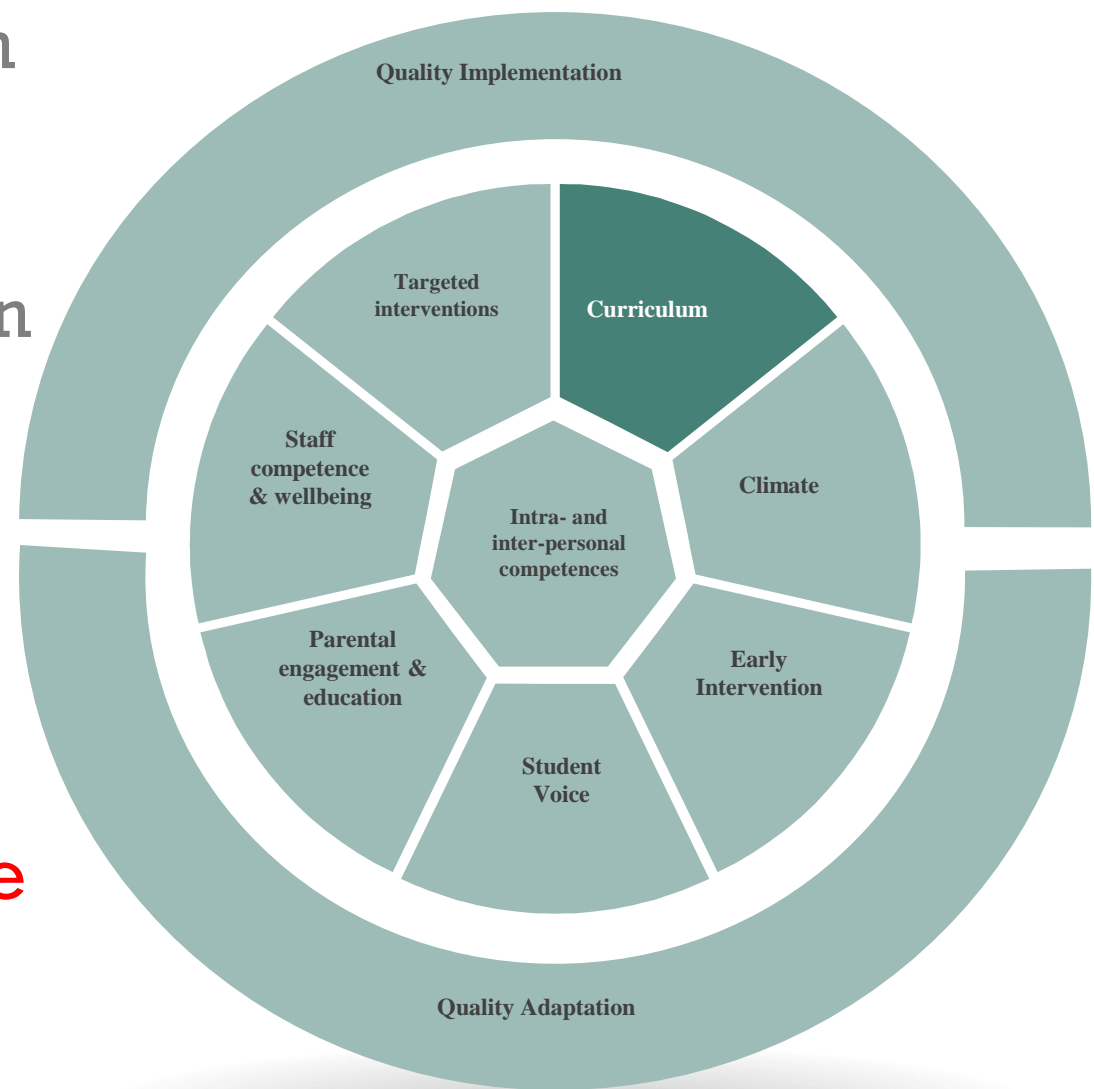- Effects maintained from 6 mths to 3 years

A framework for effectiveness

- Need for a *balanced curriculum,* focusing on both interpersonal and intrapersonal domains

- Citizenship, health promotion, physical education, prevention of violence and bullying, moral/religious education, overlap but **do not substitute SEE**
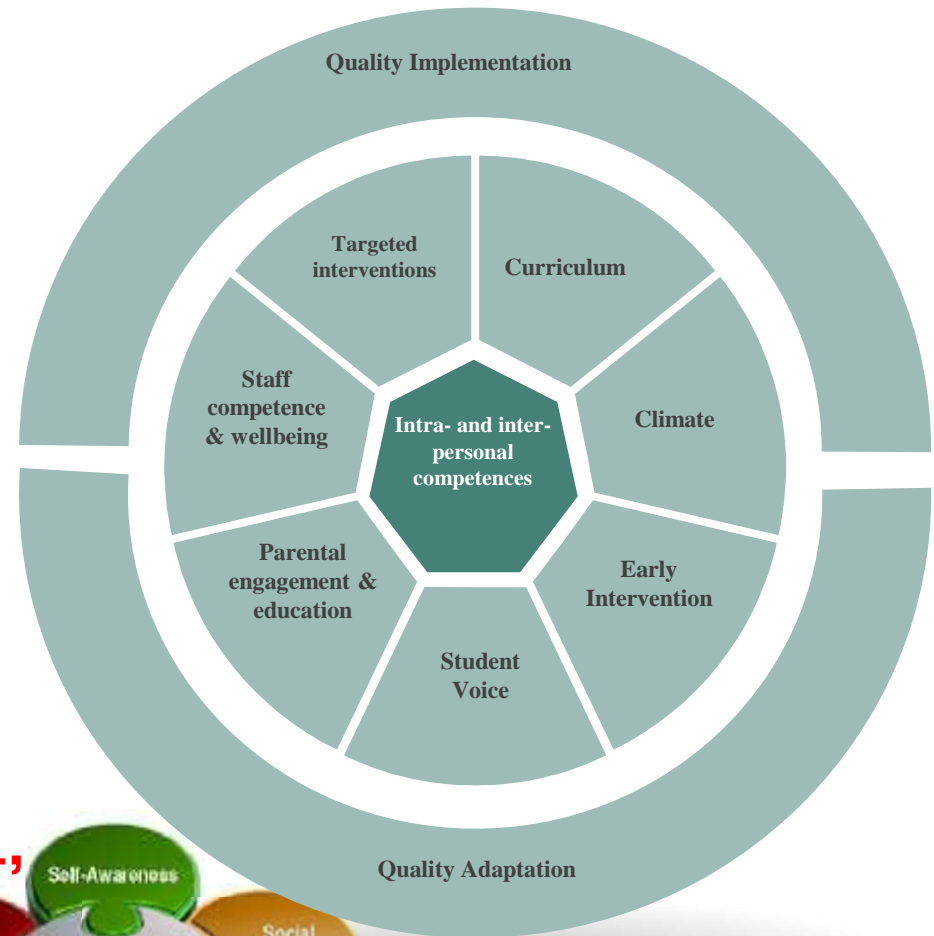
- SEE needs to be integrated as a core in the curriculum (curricular and cross curricular)- not add on (SAFE) – need for increased time on the timetable

- There is **not yet sufficient common focus** on SEE as a core curricular area

Quality Implementation

Targeted interventions

Curriculum

Staff competence & wellbeing

Intra- and inter-personal competences

Climate

Parental engagement & education

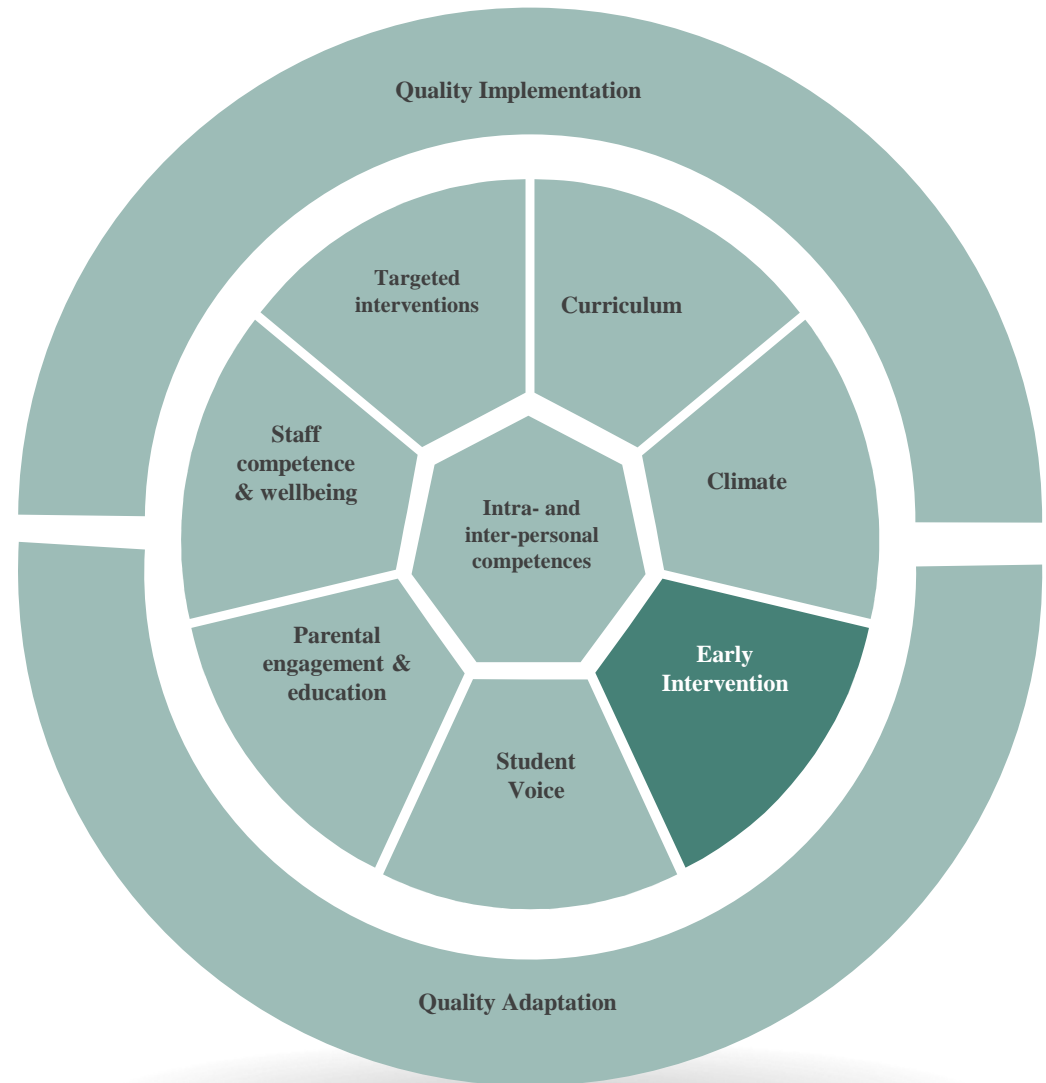Early Intervention

Student Voice

Quality Adaptation

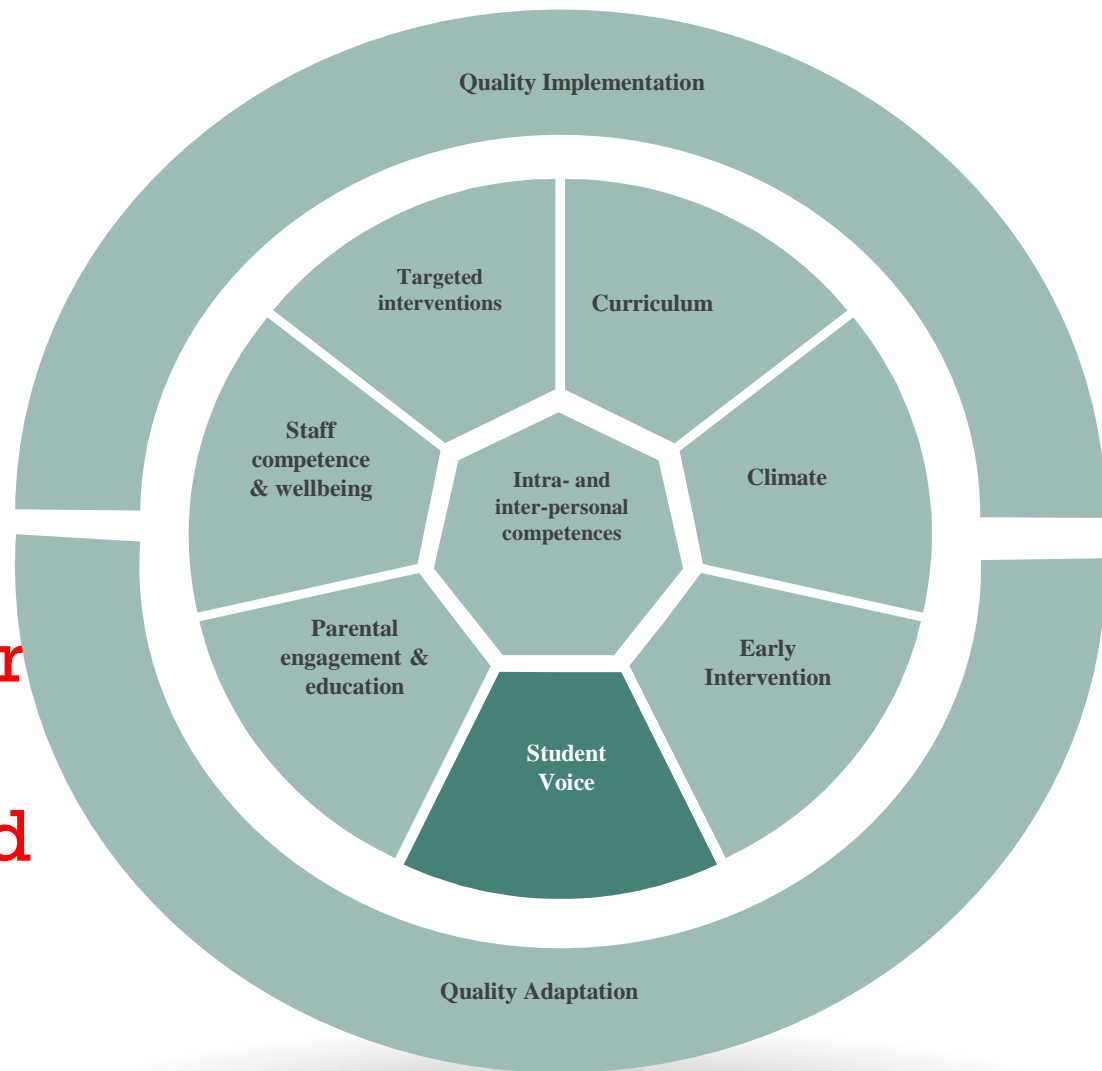SEE needs to be 'caught' through relational, contextual supports ('climate')

- Teachers need education to improve their socio-emotional competence - empathy, conflict management (eg. discrimination, authoritarian teaching)
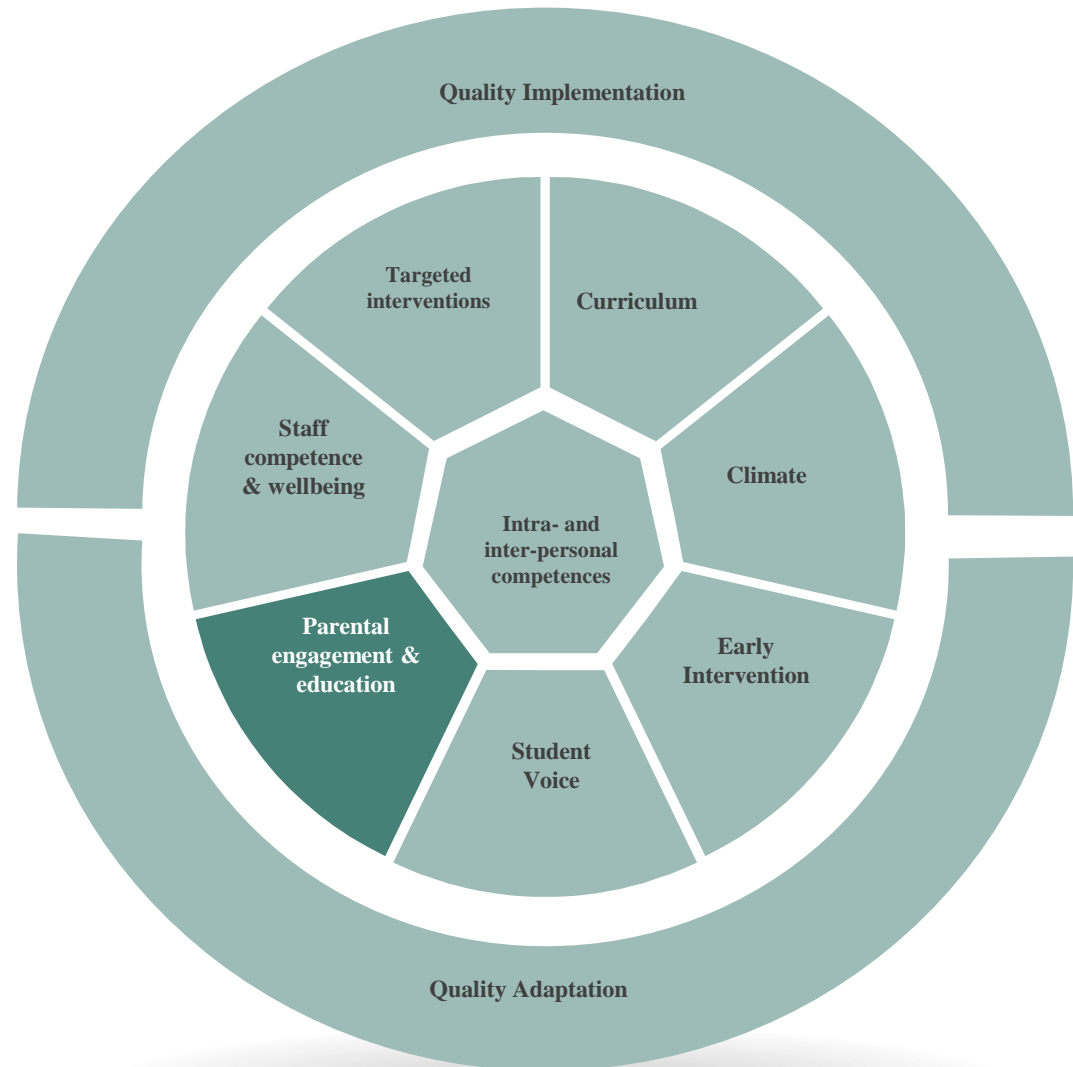
- **We need to start early:**
- SEE more effective in early years
- early SEE related to happy and productive adults (Jones et al, 2015)

- SEE offers strong economic and financial returns on investment (Belfield et al, 2015)

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Quality Adaptation

- Need for active **student voice** in learning and in design and production of material
- De Paoli et al (2018) – secondary students did not feel they received adequate SEE
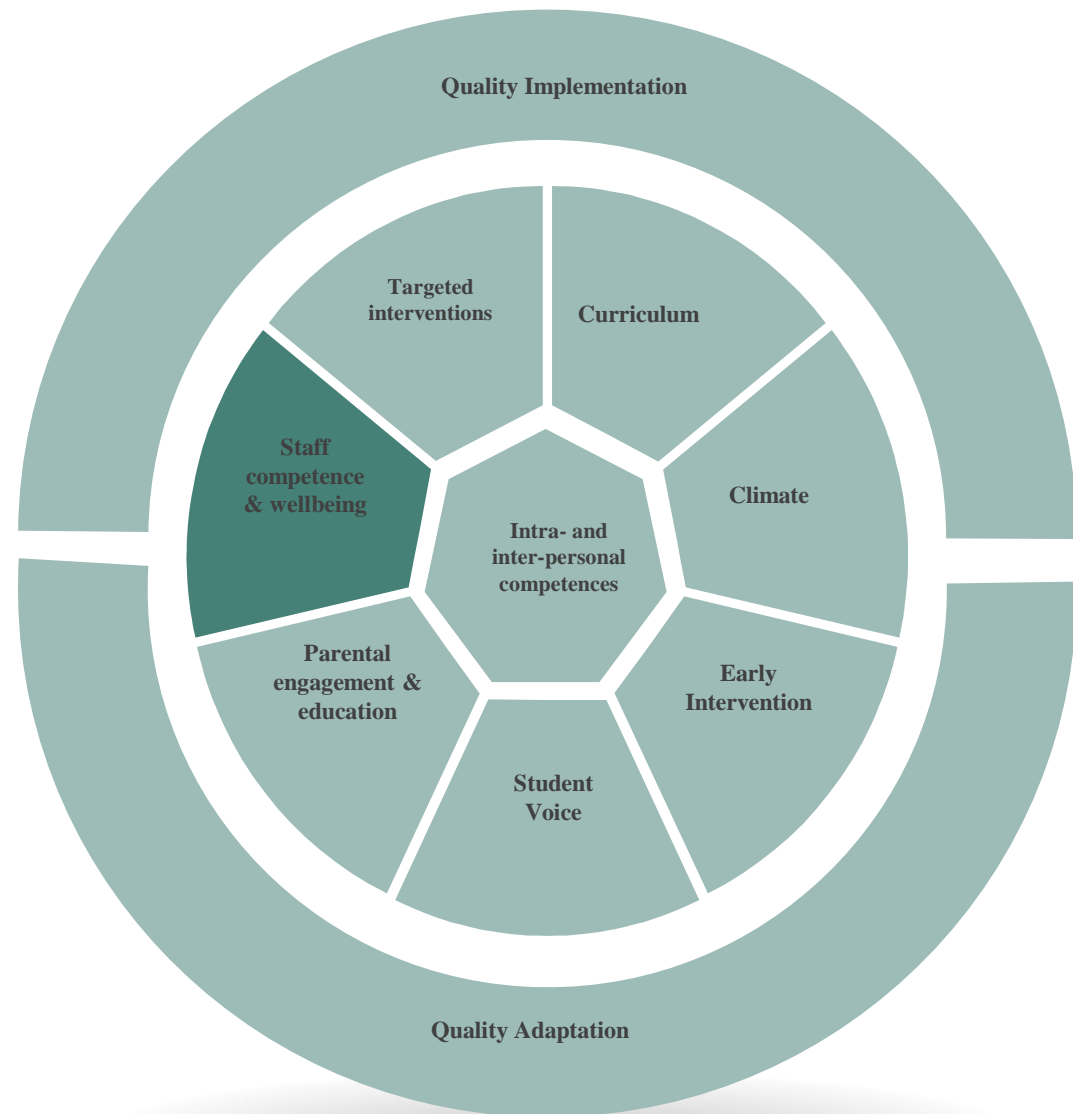

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- SEE is also about adults: parents' active engagement-**sharing responsibility** for SEE

- emancipatory approach, not top down

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Quality Adaptation

- SEE is also about teachers': **education** and own **wellbeing**

- SEE leads to more competent, confident, satisfied teachers
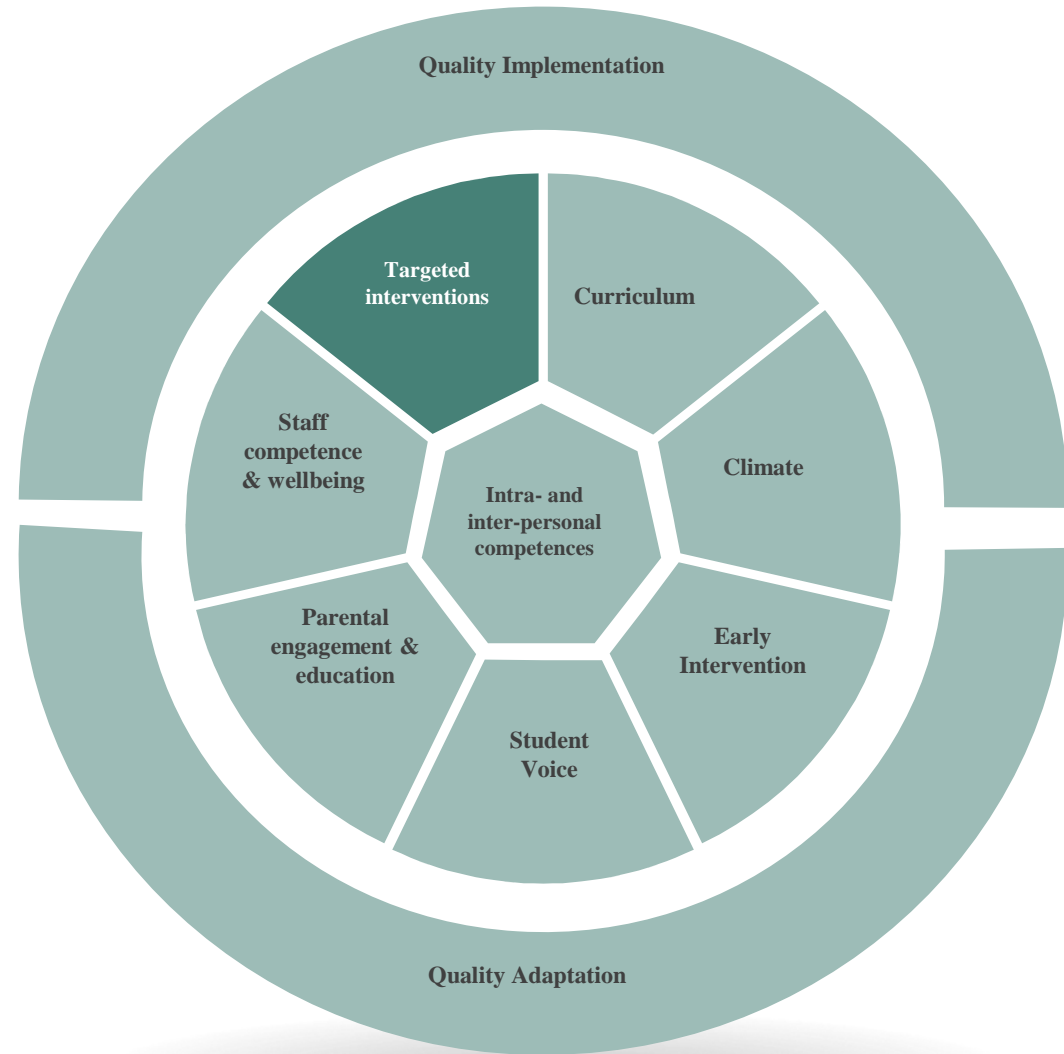
- Need for framework of key SE competences in ITE

Children with additional SE needs need extra support
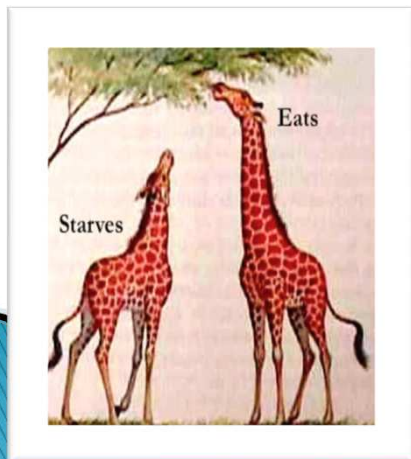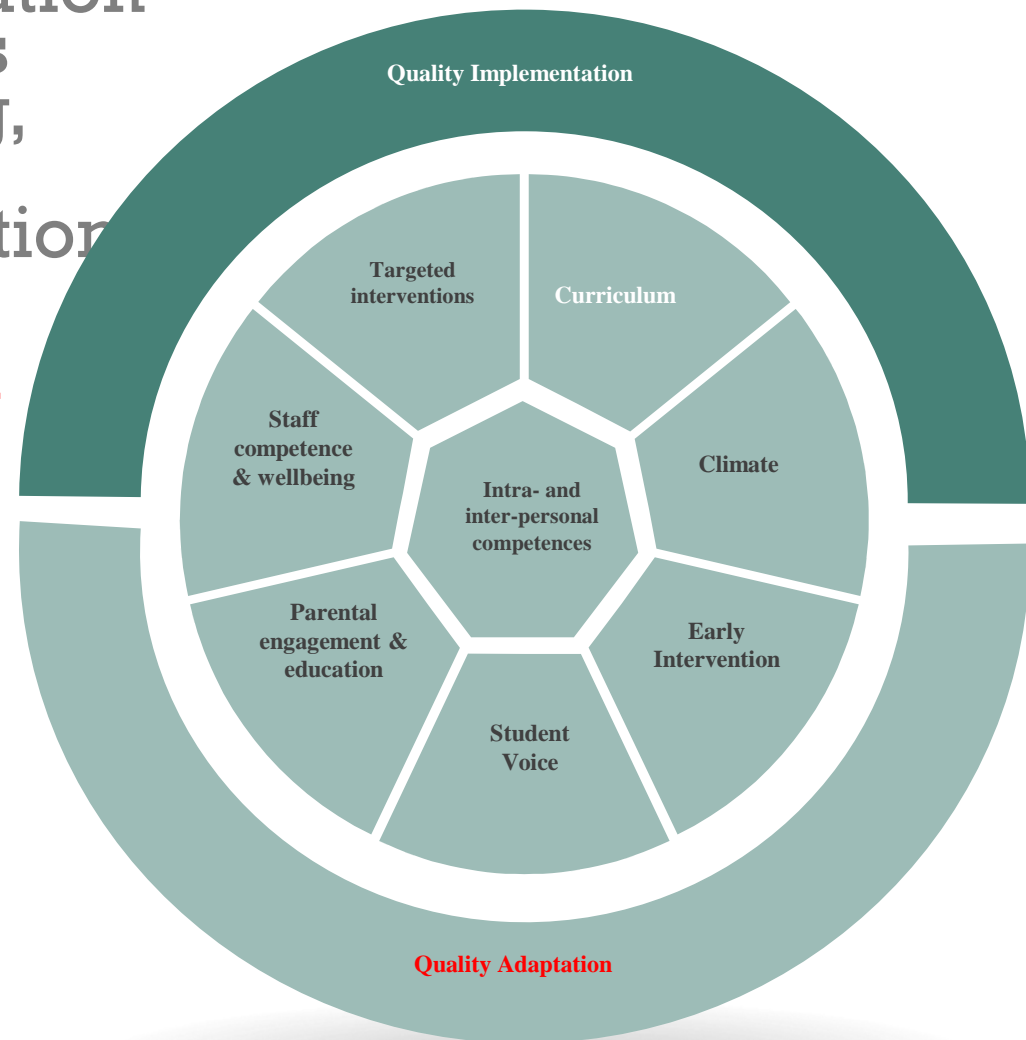## Universal + targeted interventions

Intensive Individual Intervention — Tier 3

Targeted Small Group Instruction — Tier 2

Core Classroom Instruction — Tier 1

RTI (Response To Intervention)
3 Tiers of Support

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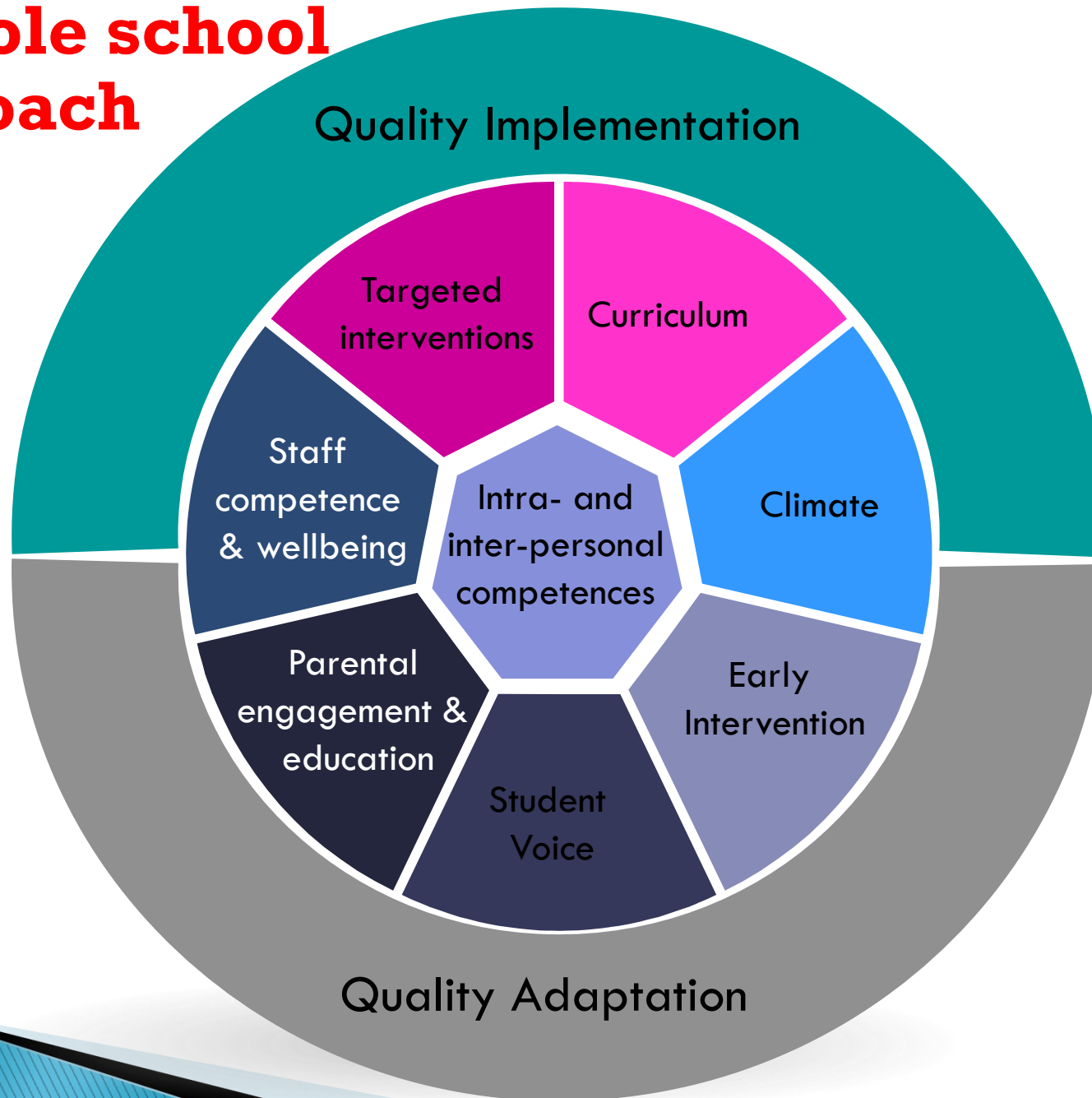
Student Voice

Quality Adaptation

- Quality implementation key to effectiveness (adequate planning, coordination, monitoring, evaluation

- **Need for sensitivity and adaptation to context: balance between fidelity and adaptation**

A whole school approach

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Some recommendations

- EU (2018) included SEE as one of the key competence areas (*personal, social and learning*)
- Universal SEE as a mandatory core content area in the curriculum (curricular, cross-curricular)
- National, culturally responsive, Learning Standards
- ITE key SE competences; adequate teacher education
- Bottom-up approach (flexibility, empowerment, local adaptability) coupled with quality implementation
- Whole school, systems approach (family, community, non formal education)

Things to avoid

▸ ***One size fits all*** paradigm (national/regional standards, formative assessment)

▸ Wholesale importation from alien cultures (eg Western bias for individualism, extraversion, assertiveness)

▸ Instrument of social control and conformity (individuality and culture flattened through prescribed personality packages promoting 'ideal' employee)

▸ Placing burden of responsibility on 'victims' to overcome disparity, without systems to address structural sources of poverty and exclusion