

Restorative Justice Policy



Adswood Primary School

Ratified by Governing Body on:	May 2023
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Introduction

Restorative Justice is a process that resolves conflict. It is part of a larger ethos also known as Restorative Practices/Approaches. It promotes telling the truth, taking responsibility, acknowledging harm as appropriate responses to conflict and in doing so creates accountability.

It is a very valuable tool as it not only allows the harmer to see the impact of their behaviour but also allows the "harmed" person the opportunity to see if they contributed to the conflict in any way by their own behaviour. Both participants are then able to agree their own joint contract of how they are going to treat each other in the future: this gives them a personal stake in the success of the contract.

Restorative Conferencing works by trained staff as facilitators who focus attention on the harm that an incident has caused to others, by giving everyone the opportunity to answer the same questions and everyone is given the same opportunity to speak. The controlled equality ensures the process is seen as fair. This encourages the truth and provides a safe environment so that responsibility can be acknowledged and genuine remorse felt. It is this feeling of remorse drawn out by the process that creates accountability.

By looking at what harm has been caused, it brings the participants together to develop a solution. This allows them to take ownership of their solution making it much more likely to succeed.

The 4 R's of RJ are based on four key features

- **RESPECT** - listening to other opinions and learning to value them
- **RESPONSIBILITY** - taking responsibility for your own actions
- **REPAIR** - discussing how to repair harm
- **RE-INTEGRATION** - working through a process that solves the problem but allows Young People to remain in mainstream education

Restorative approaches when implemented in a whole school approach:

- **Develop** - emotional literacy, conflict resolution skills, truth recognition, accountability, responsibility
- **Improve** - behaviour, attendance, learning, teaching
- **Increase** - empathy, happiness, positive life skills,
- **Reduce** - exclusions, detentions, conflict, bullying, need for sanctions
- **Compliment** – PHSE, Citizenship

Our Aims for Restorative Justice:

- To better **educate** students towards self-directed correct behaviour
- To better **promote, nurture and protect** healthy relationships among members of the community

- To better hold pupils **accountable** for the **real consequences** of wrongdoing

We operate restoratively by ...

Having **high expectations** and insisting on high standards of behaviour:

- Whilst providing **high levels of support** and care for individuals
.....being firm but fair.....
- Focusing on restoring any harm done

When to use Restorative Conferencing

- Restorative conferencing can be used - when responsibility has been accepted - to heal the harm caused by an incident. This gives the people involved in an incident the opportunity to place the conflict behind them and move on.
- Restorative conferencing can also be used when responsibility has not been accepted but the facts are agreed. Participation must be voluntary.

What Restorative Justice does for pupils

Participants resolve conflict in a way that aims to teach self-directed correct behaviour therefore making conflict a moment that is teachable (lessons learned). This develops emotional literacy, encourages responsibility and therefore creates accountability.

Benefits for Harmed Person

- Telling offender how they were affected
- Holding the offender accountable
- Having a say in how to repair the harm
- Possibly receiving an apology and restitution
- Asking the offender questions about the offence

Benefits for Wrongdoer

- Opportunity for wrongdoer to understand the consequences of their behaviour
- Learn how the incident has affected family and friends
- Help develop and implement a plan (supported if necessary) to repair the harm
- Disapprove of behaviour while affirming their worth
- Alternative to punitive disciplinary processes