



Restorative Practice Policy for Dunamase College

Table of Contents

- 1 Introduction**
 - 1.1 What is restorative practice?**
 - 1.2 Rationale**
 - 1.3 Aims and objectives of restorative practice**

- 2 Roles and responsibilities ty in effective implementation of restorative practice**
 - 2.1 The Board of Management**
 - 2.2 The Principal**
 - 2.3 Teaching Staff**
 - 2.4 Pupils**
 - 2.5 Parents and Guardians**

- 3 Whole School Implementation**
 - 3.1 What does ‘restorative justice’ mean for our school?**
 - 3.2 What are restorative practices?**
 - 3.3 Guidelines for Restorative Dialogue**
 - 3.3.1 Format for the restorative conversation where only one person is involved in the incident / issue*
 - 3.3.2 Basic questions for a restorative dialogue involving challenging behaviour*
 - 3.3.3 Basic questions for helping someone that has been hurt by another's actions*
 - 3.3.4 Format for the restorative conversation where two or more people are involved*
 - 3.4 Restorative skills required by the facilitator / mentor**
 - 3.5 Starting in the classroom**
 - 3.5.1 Running restorative circles in the classroom*
 - 3.5.2 Icebreaker circle sample questions*
 - 3.6 Incident Reflection Sheet**

- 4. Curriculum Integration**

- 5. Reference to other policies**

- 6. Review and Ratification**

- 7. Further Information**

1. Introduction

1.1. What is restorative practice?

The process of Restorative Practice aims to involve, where possible, those who were involved in or were affected by a specific incident or offence.

Collectively, harms, needs and obligations are addressed in order to heal, repair and restore damaged relationships.

1.2 Rationale

Here at Dunamase College we strive to promote respect and fairness.

In accordance with our school ethos we place a strong focus on student well-being and the need for respect for all members of the community and the environment which surrounds us.

Restorative practice aims to enable pupils to firstly respect themselves and then to treat each other and staff members with respect. In turn, teachers and staff members are expected to treat the pupils with respect.

By teaching pupils to take responsibility for their actions, to consider their behaviour and the impact it has on others, we also teach them to choose alternative, positive behaviour.

1.3 Aims and objectives of Restorative Practice

- Thinks of others
- Separate the person from the behaviour
- Recognises the extent of harm caused
- Allows everyone to tell their story
- Supports people to listen to each other
- Accounts for wrongdoing
- Acknowledges responsibility for wrongdoing
- Is an inclusive, non-judgemental process for all involved in and impacted by negative behaviour
- Promotes fairness
- Seeks understanding rather than blame

2. Roles of Responsibility in effective implementation of restorative practice

Responsibility for the implementation of this policy rests, in various ways as outlined below, with all members of the school community, i.e. the Board of Management, Principal and Teaching Staff, Pupils and Parents / Guardians.

2.1 Board of Management

- Ratify the policy
- Support the principal and teaching staff in implementing the policy and its practices
- Ensure that the entire school community embraces the restorative ethos throughout the school
- Review the policy as required

2.2 Principal

- Provide support for colleagues
- Provide training to staff where necessary in restorative practices
- Ensure that the restorative justice policy is implemented in a fair and consistent manner
- Review the policy as required

2.3 Teaching Staff

- Support and implement the policy consistently and fairly
- Promote, encourage and acknowledge positive behaviour through effective, inclusive and engaging teaching.
- Use a variety of classroom management techniques such as circle time and peer mediation
- Deal with incidents in a fair, confident and prompt manner which coincides with the principles of restorative justice
- Provide support to colleagues
- Contact parents when and where necessary in relation to matters of mutual concern
- Engage in the policy review as required

2.4 Students

- Participate in circle time
- Adopt a restorative approach when dealing with conflict
- Listen to teachers and implement their advice / instructions
- Show respect for all members of the school community
- Respect school property and the property of each member of the school community
- Be courteous and mannerly

2.5 Parents and Guardians

- Be familiar with the restorative practice policy and encourage its implementation
- Communicate with the school regarding matters of concern impacting their child's behaviour, development etc.
- Cooperate with teaching staff if their child's behaviour is a cause for concern

3. Whole School Implementation

3.1 What does 'restorative justice' mean for our school?

Whole school involvement is key to the success of the restorative justice process. It is a process to involve, to the extent possible, those who have a stake in the specific offense and collectively identify and address harms, needs and obligations, in order to heal and put things as right as possible.

3.2 What are restorative practices?

The restorative practices concept has its root in restorative justice. It is based upon the idea of restoring and building relationships.

Examples of such practices are as follows:

- Restorative circles
- Incident Reflection Sheet
- VS Ware points system
- Restorative Dialogue

3.3 Guidelines for Restorative Dialogue

3.3.1 Format for the restorative conversation where only one person is involved in the incident / issue

- The mentor (class teacher, class tutor, year head, student councillor, (vice) principal etc.) should prepare what they are going to say in advance of the meeting.
- The mentor meets with the person affected.
- The mentor should answer the first five questions listed below themselves in their opening discussion
- Ask the harmed person / wrongdoer all six questions
- Seek a mutual agreement about what needs to happen next

3.3.2 Basic questions for a restorative dialogue involving challenging behaviour

- What happened?
- What were you thinking at the time?
- What have you thought about it since?
- Who has been affected by what happened and in what way?
- How could things have been done differently?
- What do you think needs to happen next?

3.3.3 Basic questions for helping someone that has been hurt by another's actions

- What happened?
- What were your thoughts at the time?
- What have your thoughts been since?
- What impact has this had on you and others?
- What has been the hardest thing for you?
- What do you think needs to happen to make things right?

3.3.4 Format for the restorative conversation where two or more people are involved

- The mentor (class teacher, class tutor, year head, student councillor, (vice) principal etc.) meets separately with both the 'victim' / 'harmed person' and the person who caused the conflict or issue.
- Follow the steps listed above
- Both the 'victim' / 'harmed person' and the 'wrongdoer' then meet together with the mentor.
- The same list of questions are asked.
- Together a workable solution is discussed, agreed upon and implemented.
- Follow up meetings with the mentor should be scheduled to assess the success of the restorative practice dialogue / progress of the agreed upon solution.
- Meetings may be scheduled with all involved as a group or / and on a one to one basis as necessary.

3.4 Restorative Skills required by the facilitator / mentor

- Remain impartial and non-judgmental
- Facilitate dialogue and problem-solving
- Respect the perspective of all involved
- Listen actively and empathically
- Develop a rapport amongst participants
- Empower participants to come up with solutions rather than suggesting or imposing ideas
- Use creative questioning
- Have warmth, compassion and patience
- Use the correct body language and tone of voice

3.5 Starting in the classroom

The process of restorative practice cannot be successful unless the majority of the school community is on board. This includes all staff members (teachers, caretakers, administration staff etc.), pupils, parents and guardians.

- Restorative circles are at the start of the implementation of restorative practices in the school
- The next time is to make it part of every aspect of school life, for mediation to be a natural and consistent exercise when dealing with conflict or inappropriate behaviour.

3.5.1 Running restorative circles in the classroom

In school terms restorative practices often take place in a circle. This establishes equal participation for all involved and symbolises fairness, inclusion and community.

At first students may be awkward and uncomfortable but once circles are established as a normal aspect of the classroom routine, students will adapt and become very comfortable with the exercise.

Talking Piece

A talking piece is an item such as a small soft ball, a small teddy etc. The concept is that whoever has the talking piece is the one who is permitted to speak. It is a physical reminder to those in the circle that the person speaking should receive full attention. It aids in keeping the group focused and maintains a smooth running circle.

Tips for running restorative circles

- ✓ Explain what circles are about
- ✓ Explain that students are expected to participate and they must take the circle seriously.
- ✓ Pupils must not laugh at one another or tease one another.
- ✓ Start with a simple icebreaker activity to provide an opportunity for students to express something easy and non-invasive about themselves
- ✓ Teachers should try to make the activity feel special, valuable and worthwhile
- ✓ Design an activity which helps to build the confidence of pupils and which enhances relationships.
- ✓ Present clear guidelines for the circle and set definite, achievable goals.
- ✓ Set a positive tone. Be confident and upbeat.
- ✓ Keep the group focused and stick to the agreed goal.
- ✓ Always sit in the circle with the pupils and participate fully.

3.5.2 Icebreaker Circle Sample Questions

- Where would you go / what would you do if you won the lottery?
- What is your favourite...?
- What makes a good friend?

Link some questions to the curriculum / subjects being studied

- What is your favourite book / author?
- IF you could visit one country what would it be and why?
- If you could meet a famous historical figure who would it be and why?

Sample sentence starters

- I like it when my friend...
- The best thing about today is...
- My best memory from last year was...

3.6 Incident Reflection Sheet

Pupils are provided with a reflective sheet during lunchtime detention. This sheet requires them to think about a series of questions relating to their behaviour.

This encourages the pupil to consider the impact which their behaviour had on other members of their home and school community, the impact it had on themselves and how to avoid such behaviour in the future.

<i>Student Detention Reflection Sheet Questions</i>
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Is this your first detention this year?2. What happened that resulted in your being in detention today?3. What school rule was involved?4. Who else has been affected by your behaviour?5. What can you do to make right the harm you did to these people?6. What can you do to avoid being in detention again?

4. Curriculum Integration

Dunamase College views restorative practices as fundamental to the holistic development of our pupils. Teachers are encouraged to integrate these practices wherever and whenever possible, in particular in such areas as:

- CSPE
- SPHE
- Oral language i.e. discussion and debate

5. Reference to other school policies

The following policies and plans are relevant to the effective and proper implementation of the Restorative Practice Code:

- SPHE Plan
- CSPE Plan
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Code of Behaviour

6. Review and ratification

A copy of this policy is available on our school website. A copy of this policy is also available to parents in the school. The code of Restorative Practices is also discussed annually at staff meetings.

Training in this area has already commenced with teaching staff and will continue until all staff members are well briefed in the area of Restorative Practices.

7. Further information

For more info see:

[Www.Twcdi.ie](http://www.Twcdi.ie)

Www.restorativepracticesireland.ie