



**CARR JUNIOR
SCHOOL**

Aim High, Shine Bright



RESTORATIVE APPROACHES POLICY

CARR JUNIOR SCHOOL

Date of policy:

To be reviewed:

Restorative Approaches

Rationale

At Carr Junior School we value academic and social and emotional learning. We aim to encourage our pupils to become good citizens and to be able to manage and understand their emotions. We believe that every experience offers the opportunity for learning, and that when things go wrong, we are presented with an opportunity to learn from mistakes, put things right, and know how to prevent them happening in the future.

We believe that a restorative approach to problems is generally far more effective than a punitive in enabling people to understand what has gone wrong and their role in it, to have empathy for all involved, to take responsibility, and to have the tools to prevent a similar situation arising again.

To this end we have invested a great deal in developing the skills of both staff and pupils in restorative approaches. We are committed to ensuring all future staff and pupils are skilled in a restorative approach within school life. These skills include; community building through the use of group circles and the use of restorative chats, circles and conferences.

Building Community

One of the underlying principles of restorative practice is to build a sense of community. In our school this includes all staff, pupils, parents, families and governors. If pupils and staff have a sense of belonging they are more likely to invest in the school community and want to work towards putting things right. Building community means building links between each other and building relationships. This leads to more of a willingness to work together and value each other, encouraging the positive resolution of any issues.

Morning circles

Each class will start the school day with a morning circle. The aim of this is to help build a sense of community by establishing links between the children and deepening their knowledge of each other. The teacher/TA will ask a general question of all the children, and all will be encouraged to answer. An example of this would be, 'What is your favourite sweet?' Or 'which super hero would you chose to be?' When appropriate more specific questions may be asked, possibly to do with learning or PHSCE objectives. The children will physically make a circle while this is happening.

Afternoon check in

Immediately after lunch, generally as part of the registration process the children will be asked to reflect on a number between one and ten to indicate how they are feeling so far within that day. Children who score a low number will be offered support by an adult at afternoon play and offered the opportunity to talk. The purpose of this is for all children to develop their own emotional literacy. They will also have the best chance of learning, knowing that if there has been a problem, it will be dealt with, freeing them up to concentrate on the lesson.

Staff circles

Staff meeting will start with a format similar to the morning circle experienced by pupils.

Restorative processes

Restorative chat

All staff working directly with pupils will undergo training to lead a restorative chat. This is a quick, informal coming together to resolve a minor issue. The adult leading the chat will ask those involved, 'What happened? What were you thinking/ feeling at the time? What needs happen to put things right? What are you going to do differently next time?' There is no need to record the details of a restorative chat unless the adult thinks the issue is one that has not been resolved, or has been occurring repeatedly. However, all staff will be responsible for keeping a tally of chats they have led. It is anticipated that restorative chats will happen in school on an almost daily basis. The issues covered may include; friends falling out, minor disruptive behaviour in the classroom, infrequent disrespect towards an adult.

Restorative circle

All senior leadership, teacher and ELSAs/ teaching assistants will undergo training to lead a restorative circle. This will generally be held at playtime or lunchtime to minimise disruption to the school day, but may be held in lesson time if it is felt a quicker resolution is necessary. It is expected that some time will pass between an event happening and a restorative circle to allow all participants time to cool down and time to reflect. Timing will also depend on availability of appropriate staff to lead the circle. It may be necessary to arrange cover to ensure the best person for a particular circle is able to lead it. A circle is more formal than a chat and will include the question, 'Who has been affected by this?' and the reasons for it and the outcome should always be recorded on CPOMS. Participants will be invited back for a follow on circle to monitor the effectiveness of the circle. Parents will be notified that their child has been involved in a circle by a sticker in the planner. A record of the circle will be completed on the relevant record sheet.

Restorative conference

A restorative conference will generally be led by a staff member with considerable experience of restorative practice as a great deal of skill is required. Conferences happen when there has been a significant event, or where chats and circles have failed to make an impact. Bullying, persistent disrespectful or disruptive behaviour, violence towards people or property might all occasion a conference rather than a circle. Conferences are not lightly undertaken.

Adequate preparation for the conference is vital for its success. Participants need to have thought about and possibly been helped to consider their answers to the questions in advance in order that when the conference happens they are already in a mind set to want to make things right. This is a skilled process. Preparative discussions with participants need to be recorded and will be referred back to in the conference itself: the bulk of the work is done during the preparation.

At the end of the conference, the participants may be directed to record their agreements on how they will manage things differently in the future. Participants will be invited to complete an evaluation sheet. There will be a follow up meeting to review the effective the agreements.

The facilitator must record the conference and outcomes on CPOMS. A record of the conference will be completed on the relevant record sheet.

While the general expectation is that an adult will lead a chat, circle or conference between children, there may be occasions where one is required between staff, parents and children, parents and staff, or there may be a need for a conference that involves the wider community. No staff member should be expected to lead a circle or a conference that they are not comfortable with. In these cases it is expected that the designated restorative practitioner would take the lead, supported by colleagues as appropriate.

Peer mediators

Peer mediators will be trained to conduct a restorative chat as the culmination of their training. In this way the whole school will be following the restorative process.

Positive Behaviour Management

The expectation is that through the restorative process participants will gain an understanding of their role in the situation, understand both their own and others feelings at the time, who has been affected by this, what could be done to help put things right and strategies to help prevent a similar situation arising in the future.

To put things right participants will often choose to apologise, either verbally or in writing, depending on what has happened. It may be that action is suggested; doing a job for someone, repairing or replacing a broken item, staying away from someone for a while.

Sometimes a participant will feel that what they have done deserves a sanction to show the level of their remorse and to help them feel that the matter has been fully dealt with. They will be encouraged to suggest a suitable sanction themselves.

Sometimes, possibly after someone has taken part in a restorative circle or conference and there has been no significant change in behaviour, the adult leading the circle or conference may indicate that by choosing not to follow the restorative approach the participant is choosing to reflect on their choices at lunchtime. In rare cases it might be appropriate to include a sanction as part of the process. This might be for extreme disrespect or disruption, violence towards others or property or bullying. Reflection at lunchtime might be used in less severe cases, where a child has repeatedly made the wrong choice.

In the above cases the expected sanction would be Reflection at lunchtime. While in Reflection the pupil would be expected to complete a Restorative Reflection Sheet. Reflection on choices is helpful in pupils own behaviour management and emotional literacy.

Involving parents and the wider community

Carr Junior School believes that a restorative approach to school life encourages its pupils to develop a sense of community. It encourages children be honest, take responsibility, develop emotional literacy and learn from when things go wrong. It seeks to encourage this approach in other settings; the home, other schools and the wider community. We will work to encourage a deeper understanding of the restorative approach amongst parents and school's extended community, providing opportunities for them to understand the reasons behind this approach, develop the skills and understanding needed to take this approach into the home. This may happen through dedicated sessions for parents, newsletters or through the website.

Carr Junior School also works to encourage and share good restorative practices in other schools, taking every opportunity to inform others and offer the opportunity to meet with staff, visit and see the process in action.

There will be occasions where the use of a restorative circle or conference may help to alleviate a problem in the community which Carr pupils are party to. We will endeavour to help resolve such an issue restoratively; a restorative conference or circle may be offered.

Home- School Agreement

Parents and pupils will be expected to support the use of restorative practice in school, as indicated by their signature on the Home-School agreement. Evaluation Towards the end of the school year the restorative lead will conduct an evaluation of the use of Restorative Approaches in school.

This may include but not be limited to:

- How widely they have been adopted and effectiveness -to be found out by looking at CPOMS and discussion at a staff meeting
- How embedded they are in the life of the school
- How aware pupils are of RA and their understanding of what we are doing
- Whether they have been an effective way of reducing problems in school- to be found out by the use of pupil voice surveys, discussion groups or CPOMS
- How well parents understand and support Restorative Approaches- to be found out through discussion and questionnaires as appropriate.