

Restorative Practices At Massey High School

Massey High School's identity as a restorative school is embedded in practice and policy. The school believes that harmonious working relationships are integral to creating a positive social and learning environment and, in this context, restorative practices have been applied to a wide variety of events that can occur in schools, ranging from ongoing classroom disruption to incidents of serious physical, social and/or emotional harm. Repairing relationships and those affected working out solutions together, is at the heart of this method. Evaluations have confirmed the value of the approach. It has impacted on community building and reinforced ideals of accountability, shared responsibility and sense of 'fairness'. Recidivism has been reduced and, in effect, the restorative approach has enhanced a school-wide culture of mutual respect, care and support, even in the face of wrongdoing and relational conflict.

The Restorative Conference

How it works:

- It is used to respond to serious disciplinary problems
- Involves a trained facilitator neutral to the conflict arranging and holding a meeting attended by all affected: the student, their family, teachers and others affected by the behaviour
- Discusses the problem and relevant background factors
- Develops a plan to repair harm and for the student's future.

The potential outcomes:

- Acknowledgement of any wrongdoing
- A proposal to repair any harm that was caused
- A plan for the educational future of the student
- A plan for any other needed services or support for the young person, their family and others affected by the harm that was caused.

The Class Conference

A class conference is held when a whole class is being affected by hostility or conflict causing learning to be impeded and relationships to be damaged. A neutral facilitator, teacher/s, support personnel and the students sit in a circle and discuss the issues, explore the harm and come up with solutions.

The Mini Conference

Harmful events or conflicts involving several students and/or a teacher that are not serious enough to involve parents are resolved by holding a mini conference that requires little time to prepare. A neutral facilitator leads the process and the agreement reached is formalised, recorded and kept as part of the school's tracking system.

The Restorative Thinking Programme (RTP)

The Restorative Thinking Programme assists teachers with the management of disruptive behaviour in the classroom by supporting students to re-think, plan and restore their working relationship with the teacher. As a first response to inappropriate behaviour teachers are encouraged to use strategies such as one-to-one chat, or moving students within the

classroom.

If the student continues to disrupt the teacher, the teacher applies the four RTP questions, either verbally or placing the orange referral slip on the student's.



Thinking and self-correction time is given in the classroom, but should the disruption still continue, the student is sent to the RTP room to talk with specialised staff who are available to discuss and help them problem-solve the issues that led to their referral out of the classroom.

In the RTP room staff question the student to try to gain an understanding of what happened, the harm caused and its impact on others. They work towards shifting thinking and finding another way that will work for the referred student, and for others in the classroom. Goals are identified and prioritised and the student completes an RTP plan before returning to class, where the plan is discussed with the teacher. This discussion takes the form of a restorative conversation whereby both student and teacher get the opportunity to hear each other's perspective, repair the harm and reconnect. In this way classroom disruption is transformed into a learning opportunity.

A self-monitoring component acts as a daily reminder of the plan and an opportunity for students to acknowledge their own improvement. After one week form teachers follow up written plans of referred students to check that issues have been resolved and to offer pastoral support. Cumulative records, including copies of RTP plans, are filed.

RTP provides a transparent process that enables both the student and the teacher to resolve difficulties and gain an insight into each other's perspective. It supports all participants and enhances collaboration and the development of the school community as a whole.

Restorative Conversations

Restorative conversations (or chats) are regarded as the foundational restorative practice and are part of everyday school practice. Teachers are encouraged to engage in restorative conversations for relatively low-level classroom disruption, both as a preventative action and

as an early intervention. Restorative conversations model respectful dialogue and include the language of restorative enquiry at the time of disruption.

Restorative conversation questions are:

- What is happening?
- What were you thinking?
- Who do you think is being affected?
- How do you think they are affected?
- What do you need to do to put it right?
- How can we fix it?