



March 2023

Next review date: March 2025

Restorative Justice Policy

(This policy applies to all academies managed by Wootton Academy Trust [WAT])

Person responsible: Jon Kane – Assistant Head (Behaviour and Inclusion)

Reviewed by: Executive Principal

This policy, which is an appendix of the Rewards and Wootton Upper School Behaviour Policy, deals with the policy and practice which informs Wootton Upper School's use of fixed term suspension and permanent exclusion. Additionally, the policy applies to children and young people at Kimberley College and informs the college's Student Discipline Policy.

1. Introduction

Restorative justice is a process that aims to repair harm caused by an offence, wrongdoing, or conflict by bringing together those affected to talk and listen to each other. It is a collaborative process that focuses on the needs of the victim, the offender, and the wider community. Restorative justice empowers children and young people to take responsibility for their actions and learn from their mistakes, while also promoting a culture of respect, empathy, and accountability in the school community.

This policy outlines the framework for implementing restorative justice practices across Wootton Academy Trust.

2. Goals of Restorative Justice

The primary goals of restorative justice in our school and college are to:

- Repair harm caused by an offence, wrongdoing, or conflict
- Encourage empathy, understanding, and respect among children and young people
- Empower children and young people to take responsibility for their actions and make amends

- Provide a safe and supportive environment for all members of the school and college communities
- Reduce the likelihood of future conflict or harm

3. Restorative Justice Procedures

Referral

Restorative justice will be used in response to certain incidents, including but not limited to: bullying, conflict, damage to property, theft, and verbal abuse. When an incident occurs, any member of the school or college community may make a referral to the Restorative Justice Co-ordinator [RJC], the Assistant Head Behaviour at Wootton Upper School and the Assistant Head Pastoral Leader at Kimberley College. The RJC will determine who should meet the victim: at Wootton Upper School, this would usually be the Head of Year; at Kimberley College the Lead Pastoral Tutor. The member of staff identified for this role by the RJC will act as the Restorative Justice Facilitator. [RJF]

Preparation

The Restorative Justice Facilitator [RJF] will meet with the victim, the offender, and any other relevant parties to explain the process, discuss their needs and concerns, and answer any questions they may have. The RJF will also assess the suitability of the case for restorative justice and decide whether to proceed. Where necessary the RJF should seek advice from the RJC.

Dialogue

If restorative justice is deemed appropriate, the RJF will lead a dialogue between the victim and offender. The facilitator will ensure that both parties have an opportunity to express their feelings, needs, and perspectives, and that they understand the impact of their actions on each other. The RJC will encourage empathy, understanding, and respect throughout the process.

Agreement

The victim and offender, with the support of the RJF, will agree on a plan to repair the harm caused by the offence. This may include actions such as an apology, restitution, community service, or a written agreement to prevent future conflict. The agreement will be reviewed regularly by the Restorative Justice Facilitator and the RJC to ensure that it is being followed and that both parties are satisfied with the outcome.

Follow-up

The RJF will follow up with the victim, the offender, and any other relevant parties to ensure that the plan is being followed and that the harm has been repaired. If necessary, further restorative justice sessions may be arranged to address any issues that arise. The RJF will ensure records of the process are maintained securely and confidentially.

The RJF will provide a half termly summary to the RJC as part of the pastoral Line Management processes.

Confidentiality

All participants in the restorative justice process must agree to maintain confidentiality. This means that they will not discuss the details of the case with anyone who is not involved in the process, unless there is a risk of harm to themselves or others.

Unsuccessful Meetings or Refusal to Take Part

The process relies on all parties agreeing to take part in sessions to commit to the process and to be willing to accept the outcomes. Unless all parties have agreed to take part, the process cannot begin. Once the process has started all parties need to remain committed to the process. If during a session any of those taking part are unable or unwilling to proceed the session will close and an alternate resolution will be imposed. If those involved fail to comply with the expectations of the agreement alternative solutions may be applied in accordance with Wootton Upper School's Behaviour Policy or the Kimberley College Student Discipline Policy [as appropriate].

Informal Sessions

An informal restorative justice meeting might not include formal preparation but will ordinarily include a follow up. A member of staff will lead these sessions. All staff are encouraged to have a restorative approach to behaviour incidents and in their communication with children and young people.

Training

All staff and children and young people will receive information on the restorative justice process and its benefits. Staff members identified as RJFs will receive training; the RJC is responsible for ensuring this takes place.

4. Conclusion

Restorative justice is an effective way to repair harm caused by conflict or wrongdoing in our school community. It empowers children and young people to take responsibility for their actions, promotes empathy and understanding, and provides a safe and supportive environment for all members of the school community.

This policy outlines the procedures for implementing restorative justice at Wootton Upper School and Kimberley College, and we are committed to making it a core part of our approach to conflict resolution and community building.