

3 Core Values and Conflict

Being Ready, Respectful and Safe is an ideal. As an ethos for the adults and young people in our school its simplicity is its strength. But things go wrong. Adults are frequently wrong and, by its nature, learning produces more than its fair share of mistakes too. So how does conflict and error get dealt with in this relationship based ethos?

Certainly detentions, isolations and exclusions are not seen to be improving the learning of those experiencing them, if they did no student would have accumulated any more than a couple such experiences, at most, before seeing the light and changing their behaviours for good! The fact is, disruptive behaviours are “communication behaviours”. Conflicts arise because the needs (of student and teacher) are not being met. Berating and punishing a learner for not being able to explain what they really need seems a little counter-intuitive. Conflict can be resolved by the adults modelling the best way of seeking resolution. This helps learners to become more skilled in doing so for themselves throughout their lives. Students need to believe that they are worth far more than their latest mistake and this can be done through **Restorative Approached Conversations**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gJJxbn1VjYo> simple explanation of Restorative concept

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=llgBSiDLaQU> comparison between Punitive and Restorative

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9MsWz47rYyw> Restorative potential (not

The Restorative Conversation gives an opportunity to the two people between whom the bonds of respect and cooperation have broken to repair that damage. By discussing the emotions and thoughts that triggered the communication behaviour in the first place, the real need of the child/adult can be addressed. Not only that but the impact of those behaviours can be examined and understood. Most importantly, this process enables restorative action to be initiated by cooperation between the two people who need to understand each other most. The conversation should always be framed thus:

The Restoratively Framed Discussion

1. What **happened**
2. What were you **thinking**
3. What were you **feeling**
4. Who was **affected**
5. What happens **next**

This allows both parties to respectfully explain their part, with a high degree of safety, and calmly develop a win/win solution to future potential situations. In fact, with the fear of not being heard in the heat-of-the-moment confrontation removed, truthful accounts of what happened flow from adult and learner alike.

This process does NOT let students “get away with it”. The final stages of the meeting enable the learner and teacher to reflect on the effects of the behaviour, immediate and knocked on, and allows them to repair them. This should leave both parties **ready** to learn next lesson, having **respectfully** worked together to create a **safer** and more **respectful** environment for all.