

Restorative Approaches in London PRUs



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Foreword

This work was a key element of the whole Back on Track Project in London between 2009 and 2011.

Some PRUs had been using Restorative Approaches (RA) but for the first time this project took a whole school developmental approach to the introduction of RA. This report sets out in detail the learning about process, journey and outcomes so that other PRUs can identify the key steps for their work in introducing RA. The learning is about:

- how the steering group worked – and how this could be replicated at the local level
- the role of trainers in the varied contexts of PRUs
- developing methods of judging outcomes – and the quality of the RA work.

But the report also reflects on how both the funded pilots and the unfunded pilots worked together and shared practice. In times of great resource pressure the collaborative approach to problem solving at all levels is critical and this report points to how it can be done.

But in the end this work is all about young people in our PRUs – and this work has helped many of them develop problem solving skills, conflict resolution knowledge and build better relationships with other pupils and staff. I congratulate Luke Roberts in chairing this work and all those involved in supporting and implementing Restorative Approaches in PRUs.

I commend this report to other PRUs so that other young people can have the benefits of this important work.



John d'Abbro

Chair of the Pan London Back on Track Project

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About the Steering Group

Back on Track: Restorative Approaches Steering Group Members

Luke Roberts, chair: Restorative Approaches and Problem-Solving Workstream

I have been involved in the development of Restorative Approaches (RA) in the UK for a number of years now, as a practitioner, trainer, researcher and consultant. I have seen its value in a wide range of issues in schools. I was delighted to be asked to oversee the development of restorative practice in Pupil Referral Units in London by the Back on Track Advisory Group. As chair, my task was put to me simply by a PRU Head teacher: *'I need an idiot's guide to Restorative Approaches for my PRU'*. Therefore, this report aims to be a practical guide for PRUs wishing to implement and develop restorative practice in their setting, using PRU specific research.

In building a steering group to oversee the *Back on Track: Restorative Approaches and Problem-Solving Workstream*, I have been fortunate to have a diverse group with a wide range of expertise. This has included PRU Heads, PRU co-ordinators of restorative programmes, academics, the Metropolitan Police, behaviour and attendance consultants, and the Prison Reform Trust acting as our independent monitor to challenge our thinking and assumptions from an outside perspective.

The Restorative Approaches and Creative Problem Solving Steering Groups members:

Name: Sandy Pepper and Mark Hartill, Metropolitan Police Service (MPS).

We support the work of Back on track in PRUs and can see the benefit to MPS in dealing with challenging young people and giving support to staff.

We are both involved in developing and delivering Restorative Justice for the MPS. Being involved in Back on Track provides an opportunity to enhance our knowledge and pass on ideas and good practice from a police perspective

Our increased knowledge and understanding of Restorative Practices from other experts involved in the project and the pilot schools have enabled us to

progress the implementation of Restorative Justice in the MPS. This has led to pilot projects being established in two boroughs, leading to a London-wide roll-out in the next 12 months.

Name: Peter Jones - Head teacher for Phil Edwards PRU, and Sian Thomas, previous Head of Victoria House Primary PRU, representing the Croydon PRUs.

Full and active members of the project from the beginning, wanting to see this develop as part of the service Croydon PRUs offer.

For Peter, it is to continue to embed RA into Phil Edwards with a view to the PRU becoming a local resource for schools.

For Sian: it is to expand my expertise in methods of managing to resolve conflict within the school environment. I now have a working understanding of Restorative Approaches.

Name: Dr Kimmitt Edgar – Prison Reform Trust, independent advisor.

Reason for participating in the project: I am committed to developing and expanding the use of restorative justice.

Some of the questions I asked during the process may have helped to focus on the restorative outcomes of the project. I hope that I shared enthusiasm for this ground-breaking approach to PRUs. I saw very different school environments adapt and apply restorative justice to serve a range of objectives.

Lessons I have taken from the project – particularly the sensitivity required to move the culture – will help me in promoting greater use of restorative justice in prisons.

Name: Dr Dawn Jennifer – Anti-Bullying Alliance Regional Advisor London.

Reason for participating in the project: Interest in Restorative Approaches and addressing bullying, contributing to the evaluation and interviewing the Head teachers.

Name: Alan Clode - Victoria House PRU

Reason for participating in the project: Whole staff received RA training and was part of a non-funded pilot. I have enjoyed the shared practice – which I took away and implemented at Victoria House.

Next steps for me after the project are to continue with Circle Time in every class every morning using RA language where relevant. Continue with RA referral system in place, but keep on pushing it to avoid a slip-back into old ways. Offer RA to mainstreams as part of our new pilot scheme as a behaviour support link team.

Name: Lawrence Archibald, Jackie Lynch – The Park Campus, Lambeth.

Reason for participating in the project:

For Lawrence:- I was asked to join the project/ steering group to give our expertise and knowledge around restorative approaches as the B.O.T funding was aimed at implementing restorative approaches in three schools. On a personal level it was a real pleasure and a learning curve to be:

- involved in such a productive and important project
- to be part of a group that contained so much diverse experience and knowledge which I took a lot from
- to know that my experience and knowledge was valid enough to be asked to be part of such an experienced and high ranked personnel group

For Jackie: The participation in this project made me realise just how much I have learned over the time I have been using the restorative approach in my setting. I was able to confidently share my knowledge, and also look at the implementation in other settings. I enjoyed working with the Heads of other PRUs and knowing that they valued my advice and suggestions. Restorative approaches have had a positive effect in the PRU that I work in and a positive effect on the schools that have implemented it. I wish all involved great success for the future.

Name: Terence Bevington - Hackney Learning Trust

Hackney applied to be one of the pilot PRUs, but were not selected. We were interested in still being a part of the Workstream to share our experiences and learn from other PRUs' experiences.

Personal success: Facilitating the final staff focus

group was a privilege – to hear the experiences of colleagues from other PRUs. I have already fed back some of the thoughts and ideas from the participating PRUs to our RU in Hackney.

To build on the links made with the three participating PRUs by arranging mutual visits (with Hackney PRUs) to share experiences, knowledge and resources.

I would also like to thank Graham Robb and John d'Abbro as Chairs of Back on Track for their support and encouragement throughout. Also to Fern Edwards at London Councils for her support and management of the Back on Track work.

Having the right people at the right time in the right place is crucial to success; all those involved wanted this to be a success and I have valued their expertise insightfulness and realism of working with and in PRUs. Finally, I would like to thank the Heads, staff and pupils who participated in this project. Without them we would not have this research and their experiences of restorative approaches. All of those involved have wanted to see this project make a difference to PRUs and the young people across London. We believe that this report contributes to the evidence base and successful implementation of Restorative Approaches.

The challenge for the workstream

The two big challenges of this workstream were:

1. What are restorative approaches?
2. What is a Pupil Referral Unit?

These two questions shaped the workstream process and its model of evaluation.

What is a Restorative Approach?

The term 'Restorative Approaches' started to be used in education, particularly mainstream schools, as it is more flexible than the term 'Restorative Justice'. The term 'restorative justice' has been used in the criminal justice system to identify a range of processes which the Restorative Justice Council defines as:

Restorative processes bring those harmed by crime or conflict, and those responsible for the harm, into communication, enabling everyone affected by a particular incident to play a part in repairing the harm and finding a positive way forward.

However, the term restorative justice has often focused on clear victim/offender roles. The steering group was aware that the term restorative approaches was used in schools, where it was not clear who started the incident or what harm had been caused. The steering group came to its own definition which is:

"A way of preventing and resolving conflict, which allows individuals to resolve differences. It develops the language of emotion and allows people the time to collect thoughts and feelings. There is a calm resolution process where everyone is listened to and usually the result is a point where issues are resolved and people can move on."

This definition allowed us to look at what approaches were used to prevent harmful behaviour as well as how the school community responded to conflict and bullying behaviour. There is also the recognition that the approach used will not work in every incident, for the participants involved. There has been no research done specifically in PRUs on implementation or successes of restorative approaches, which leads us to our second question:

What is a PRU?

To those working in a PRU this may seem a really silly question. However, for the steering group this was a real challenge. It is difficult to measure success if you don't know what to measure it against, and the context of PRUs is very different to both mainstream and special schools. PRUs deliver a range of services across a wide variety of age groups, geographies and pupil needs. These services include providing education to excluded pupils, helping pupils return to mainstream education, working with school-phobic pupils, teenage mothers, one-to-one teacher support. Unlike mainstream schools, PRUs' services support a wider variety of young people for different periods of time, some for six weeks, a year or throughout a significant period of a young person's life to help gain qualifications.

The constant changing nature of PRUs meant that we could not compare like-with-like, for example, by pupil population, as PRUs vary in size and amount of time spent on site. Nor would we be able to compare outcomes for pupils as some would be there for very short periods of time while others can be there for the majority of their school education. Using exclusion as a measure of success was not deemed suitable by the Head teachers involved in the project, as this would not take into account the holistic aspects of restorative approaches such as learning, or improvements in staff performance. We therefore focused our research of the potential pilot areas on staff values, perceptions and skills as they are the most constant aspect of PRU life.

Creating the Restorative Approaches workstream

The work of the steering group would be to allocate £30,000 to each pilot area. It was also decided to have a non-funded area to see what could be achieved without the start-up costs being covered. The steering group was concerned that, because of the short life-span of the Workstream, money should be spent on actual delivery to show evidence of what restorative approaches can do in PRUs. The steering group immediately focused on two key tasks:

1. Develop selection criteria for PRU to be funded.
2. Create a monitoring and evaluation process

1. The selection criteria

Due to the changeable nature of PRUs, the steering group looked to the work of Dr Dawn Jenifer who has devised criteria for looking at mainstream schools' abilities to take on Anti-Bullying projects. The full literature review is available in a separate document.

The key features for implementing change were:

Leadership:

The ability of the school's leadership to articulate the values and vision of the school are key to whether a new initiative is understood by staff and pupils as something that fits within the existing framework. Furthermore, leadership also includes the ability of the senior leadership and particularly the Head teacher to include others in decision-making about the introduction of the new initiative. Inclusive leadership leads to a shared ethos in which staff, across the organisation, collaborate in the introduction of restorative approaches.

Structure:

School structure plays an important part in the ability to successfully adopt a new initiative or project. School structures can be identified as the leadership structure, forms of communication, policies and access to resources. The dominant structure of schools is hierarchical, with top down—management directing and controlling resources and initiatives. However, PRUs and schools that are able to adopt initiatives, and specifically the adoption of restorative approaches, recognise the need to adapt the school or PRU structure to incorporate this into their organisational vision.

Culture:

The success of an initiative can be determined by how integrated it has become in the school or PRU culture. If the culture of the organisation rejects the change being proposed, both the leadership and structural changes will not impact to the full extent, because leaders will feel undermined and structural changes will be subverted.

When implementing, it is important to plan for culture change such as:

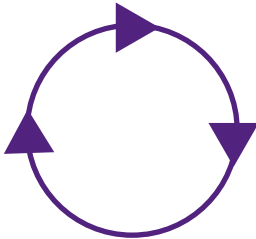
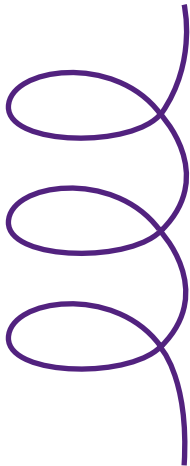

- *observed behavioural patterns* when teachers interact in a staffroom, such as the language they use and the rituals they establish
- the *norms* that evolve in working groups of teachers with regard to lesson planning or monitoring the progress of pupils
- the *dominant values* supported by a school, its aims or mission statement
- the *philosophy* that, for example, guides the dominant approach to teaching and learning of particular subjects in a school
- the *rules of the game* that new teachers have to learn in order to get along in the school or their department.

These three factors can be combined into working models to assess the effectiveness of a PRU's ability to take on restorative approaches.

The Circular Model:

The Circular Model reflects an organisation that is self-aware and responsive and operates from a clearly focused rationale. The school is able to prioritize its course of action and is aware of the need for constant review and evaluation of practice. The culture in the school could be characterised as democratic with a focus on children's participation in decision making. The school recognizes the negative consequences of not addressing the issues of bullying and violence and is committed to the process of change. The school has an internal locus of control. A school operating from this model of readiness is likely to adopt and successfully implement an initiative.

Figure 1. Models of readiness. (Source: Jennifer and Shaughnessy, 2005)¹.

Models	Key characteristics
	<p>Circular Model</p> <p>The school clearly articulates its educational vision</p> <p>The school ethos is explicit through all areas of school life. Emphasis is placed on children's participation and empowerment Emphasis on the wider curriculum and emotional literacy</p> <p>Places value on children's social time outside the classroom to enhance learning across the school day</p> <p>A responsive and reflexive leadership and management style</p> <p>The school displays good knowledge of its strengths and weaknesses and can prioritise targets</p> <p>Strives for consistency between behaviour policy and practice</p> <p>An emphasis on communication and dynamic relationships with children, staff, parents, governors and the wider community</p> <p>Training and development is linked to the school review process</p> <p>The school rationalises and selects from initiatives at both national and local level</p>
	<p>Corkscrew Model</p> <p>The school shares its educational vision</p> <p>The school ethos not always made explicit. Emphasis is placed on children's participation</p> <p>Emphasis on the wider curriculum and emotional literacy</p> <p>An absence of supportive strategies that value children's time outside the classroom</p> <p>A pragmatic 'quick fix' style of management</p> <p>The behaviour policy facilitates the review of practice</p> <p>An emphasis on communication with some evidence of parental support and community links</p> <p>Training as a mechanism for change and self-reflection</p> <p>The school selects from initiatives at both national and local level</p>
	<p>String Model</p> <p>The school has difficulty in articulating its educational vision</p> <p>The school ethos is not explicit</p> <p>Emphasis is placed on academic achievement and the formal curriculum little emphasis is placed on the supportive strategies that value children's time outside the classroom</p> <p>A strategic or autocratic style of management and inconsistencies between behaviour policy and practice</p> <p>Limited evidence of systems and policies for the management of pupils and staff. Ineffective communication between staff and professional isolation</p> <p>Limited evidence of home/school/community links</p> <p>The school has difficulty selecting from initiatives at national and local level and tends to become overloaded</p>

¹ Jennifer, D., & Shaughnessy, J. (2005). Promoting non-violence in schools: The role of cultural, Organisational and managerial factors. *Educational and Child Psychology*, 22(3), 58-66.

The Corkscrew model:

The Corkscrew Model reflects an Organisational culture that fluctuates. The school is sometimes able to identify action through self-reflection, but the action is not always clearly focused. The culture in the school could be characterised as pragmatic with some emphasis on children's participation. While the school acknowledges the existence of bullying and violence, takes ownership of the problem, and identifies some of the negative aspects of its presence, it is ambivalent about committing to the process of change. The school has a locus of control that fluctuates between external and internal input. A school operating from this model of readiness is likely to either feel complacent about the issues requiring change or to feel ambivalent about adopting and implementing an initiative.

The String Model:

The String Model reflects a fragile organisational culture. The school has limited self-evaluation, and experiences difficulty in identifying a clear course of action. The culture in the school could be characterised as strategic, with little emphasis placed on children's participation. The school is not yet sensitive to the bullying and violence experienced by their children and young people. However, others may be aware of a problem, for example, parents or the wider community. The school has an external locus of control. A school operating from this model of readiness is unlikely to have much success with adopting an initiative.

Readiness report: literature review document is available as a separate document at:
<http://www.londonprus.co.uk/assets/media/Back%20on%20Track%20Final%20Report.pdf>

A letter was then sent to all PRU heads in London to ask for expressions of interest. Nine PRUs confirmed they would like to be directly involved in the project. The Steering Group then identified from the nine, three pilot areas that fitted the selection criteria based on the cyclical model.

In addition, these PRUs were from different parts of London, had different age ranges and also different organisational models. This would allow the steering group to look at specific and general learning points to be shared with the pilot areas and across London

2. Creating a monitoring and evaluation process

The challenges of evaluating a PRU have already been mentioned above. However, trying to conduct any form of benchmarking to compare the three pilot areas was even harder. Due to the different clientele each PRU had, different lengths of stay, as well as changes in cohort, a pupil evaluation was ruled out very quickly. Also, secondary evidence such as exclusion and attendance data was ruled out as other factors could impact on this, although it was thought this would still have benefit to the individual PRUs.

The main focus of the evaluation would be staff, as they were the one constant throughout the implementation and development of restorative approaches. The evaluation methodology was as follows:-

- Head teacher interviews
- staff focus groups
- staff questionnaire

The three methods were used at the beginning and end of the project to see if perceptions and practice had changed during the implementation of restorative approaches in each setting. Pupil interviews and focus groups were conducted at the end of the evaluation to see how pupils perceived the implementation of restorative approaches and its benefits.

The funded pilot areas: PRU profiles

BRENT

PRU Name: Brent KS4 PRU

Pupils on roll: 36 (can be up to 50)

Number of staff: 20

Head teacher/ Teacher in Charge: Janis Mahony

Background to PRU:

From staff consultations report from BCYP

The PRU has endured many changes over recent years including: a move to a new building, a change in leadership and the traumatic loss of members of staff through illness. Events that would test the resilience of any staff team, but particularly a small close knit team that typifies many PRUs.

The PRU has a good reputation and has been rated as Outstanding by Ofsted.

The change in Head teacher has brought with it a change in management style which has been generally well received. However, there have also been some mixed feelings among the staff.

The Head teacher is in the unique position of receiving funding to develop Restorative Practices in the school and she wishes to take full advantage of this 'one-off' opportunity.

Reason for participating in Back on Track: Restorative Approaches workstream:

- Head teacher's belief that working in an emotionally literate way better meets the needs of students and staff.
- need for improvement in staff wellbeing
- need to improve learning
- need to reduce conflict
- need to develop consistent approach to conflict
- need to promote positive behaviour in students
- need to support staff, students and institution through change and provide framework for that change

Biggest challenge:

- implementing restorative practice at an institution

which is going through a sustained period of change

- ensuring that staff are supported through this change and are able to manage the process, and take on challenges
- putting the approaches into practice and putting structures in place to support Restorative Practices
- it is a challenge to develop a no-blame approach, not only with students but also with staff
- the acceptance and practice of Restorative Practices can challenge beliefs and values, but not everyone will feel comfortable working in this way, and it takes time to develop consistency of practice and commitment
- building staff confidence in RP is difficult; we are not yet in a position to provide data to show its effectiveness
- RP not yet firmly embedded need to develop structures that do this and continue to build commitment in the staff team, and make students aware of the approach and why we are using it.

Success so far:

- inclusion of all staff (including administration and cook) in training
- involvement of mainstream schools and other agencies in training
- "what do you need exercise" carried out with students and staff
- there is an understanding that RP is going to be developed
- there is a greater level of support for RP amongst staff
- a high percentage of staff have taken up supervision
- circles have been used occasionally to discuss community issues
- it has informed staff practice and there are a number of "converts"
- more staff are using RA language
- a number of full conferences have been run to resolve difficult situations between students and involved parents successfully.

- five themes are beginning to be part of normal practice

Head teacher tip for implementation:

Ensure that staff are supported to adopt practices.

Contact details:

Janis Mahony :e-mail jm@pru.brent.sch.uk
Brent KS4 PRU
Poplar Grove
HA9 9DB

CAMDEN

PRU Name: One One Five (and Eversholt Centre)

Pupils on roll: 28 (across both centres)

Number of staff: 9 F/T, 5 P/T (Teaching and Support),
2 Admin and co-ordination

Head teacher/Teacher in Charge: Gaby Thomas

Background to PRU:

KS3 PRU with places for permanently excluded/managed move students and intervention places for students at risk of permanent exclusion from their mainstream school. At our annex centre we also currently offer places for students from day 6 of fixed term exclusion, LAC students awaiting mainstream placement and students on intervention/re-engagement part-time placements from their mainstream schools.

All our students have SEBD and some students have additional learning needs.

Reason for participating in Back on Track: Restorative Approaches workstream:

We had tended to use a restorative approach when handling issues of conflict between students and occasionally with staff and would use exclusion as a last resort. The approach was rather ad-hoc and only a few staff had received formal training. We saw the opportunity of developing an embedded approach as an excellent way to develop and enhance our current way of working and were excited about the potential opportunity to extend this work within our SEBD consortium of provision and also to roll the approach out to mainstream schools through our outreach team.

Biggest challenge:

We felt it was very important that the whole staff team was properly trained and received at least two days of training – this is a big commitment when there are so

many other pressures for training. Of course, the funding meant that we were able to cover supply and training costs to do this.

There was some challenge in getting all staff on board with the process but the quality of the training we received really helped to empower staff and to get “buy in”.

Success so far:

We have seen a reduction in sanctions and an increase in rewards being given. We have seen a significant drop in serious incidents and exclusions. In particular, we have seen a drop in incidents of threatening behaviour and violence.

Head teacher tip for implementation:

“The key to successful implementation is to ensure that existing systems and procedures for behaviour management are in place, are effective and are consistently applied. From this point, with a whole staff team that has been well trained and are committed to working in a restorative way, this approach can bring about significant changes for the better across a whole range of measures.”

SUTTON:

PRU Name: The Limes College

Pupils on roll: 100

Number of staff: 55

Head teacher/Teacher in Charge: Emma Bradshaw

Background to PRU:

The PRU works closely with schools and offers both respite and longer term Key Stage 4 programmes. It often has pupils returning to it after a period of respite and these pupils often get caught back up into dynamics from broken relationships that they were on respite from and that have not been restored, between both the staff and the pupil and between them and others in their peer group. One of the key areas that the young people who access their education in the PRU have is a history of poor attachments / relationships. This is within their education, social and home environments. Conflict is a familiar way of interacting for them and is a pattern of behaviour that they have learned to use to get attention. This means that conflict in the PRU is a common feature and a key area of work for all staff and young people alike.

**Reason for participating in Back on Track:
Restorative Approaches workstream:**

- to develop more restorative outcomes for students in the PRU
- staff development
- develop more restorative approaches with partner secondary schools

Biggest challenge:

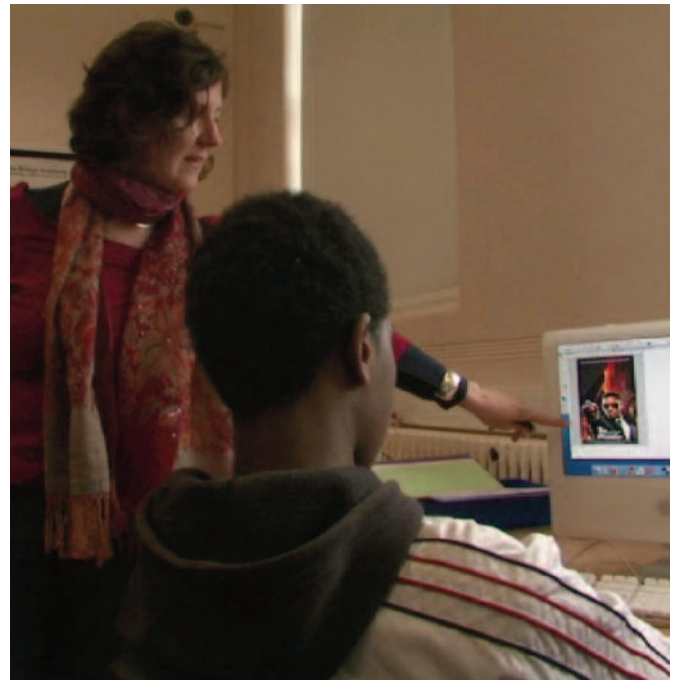
- time
- some staff beliefs
- being given time to allow the process of change and implementation

Success so far:

- all staff trained (one day)
- twenty five staff trained for four days
- starting to change beliefs and attitudes
- given us language and tools to implement in our new building and future development

Head teacher tip for implementation:

- give time to process
- include sceptics as well as converted in implementation group and lead staff
- Rome wasn't built in a day and if it had been it would have fallen down. Allow time to initiate change and don't go too fast; pace is important ; enough momentum to keeping moving forward, but not so much that you lose people along the way.



Non-Funded Pilot Area - Croydon

PRU Name: Cotelands PRU

Pupils on roll: 40 + 40 (nursery)

Number of staff: 8 teaching team [6 part-time], admin team – 3 [inc. 2 part-time], varying number of nursery staff

Head teacher/Teacher in Charge: Jenny Adamson

Background to PRU: KS3 schoolgirl mothers and pregnant schoolgirls, KS4 Emotionally Based School Refusers (mixed), 0-3yrs nursery.

Reason for participating in Back on Track:

Restorative Approaches Workstream:

Need to develop the emotional literacy of pupils by providing them with the tools to solve conflict in their school situation and transfer these to other areas of their lives.

Biggest challenge:

Training a team of part-time staff.

Success so far:

Some highly effective RA meetings – seeing the surprise on the faces of parents/carers who have not seen their sons/daughters behave in such a mature way in the past, when dealing with their difficulties.

Totally liberating not having to deal with incidents using the 'Poirot approach' – who did what to whom and when!

Head teacher tip for implementation:

Find a way of training your staff early on. Secure as full a 'buy in' to the ethos and approach then build into your behaviour policy and procedures.

Contact details:

jennya@cotelands.croydon.sch.uk, 020 3252 2020.

PRU Name: Phil Edwards Centre

Pupils on roll: 90 approx. (see below)

Number of staff: Teaching 22 (17.5 fte. - Home Tutors not included), Support 11 (10.8 fte.)

Head teacher/Teacher in Charge: Peter Jones

Background to PRU, based on 4 sites:

Sylvan Road: KS3 & 4 mainly permanently excluded students (48)

Croydon Digital: KS 4 on-line teaching service for students unable to attend school (30)

Bridge to School: KS3 early intervention support (10)

Hospital School: based in Mayday Hospital supporting students on the Rupert Bear Ward (approx. 450 per year)

Home Tuition: individual support for students unable to attend school for either medical reasons or awaiting SEN placement (approx.

Reason for participating in Back on Track:

Restorative Approaches workstream:

Wanted a different way to resolve conflict both student/student and student/staff where the outcome is a learning experience rather than the crime/punishment model (although this has its place).

Biggest challenge:

Changing staff 'mind set' when dealing with conflict.

Finding time to work with students in a restorative way during the very busy and 'full-on' day in a PRU.

Success so far:

All staff on the Sylvan Road and Bridge-to-School sites trained. Some procedures amended. Some success with individual cases.

Head teacher tip for implementation:

Need to secure 'buy-in' as early as possible. Train 'significant and influential' staff initially then train as many staff together as possible and amend policy and practice as part of the training.

Contact details:

peterjone@philedwards.croydon.sch.uk 02087715603

PRU Name: Moving On PRU

Pupils on roll: 36 on site

Number of staff: 16 (including support staff)

Head teacher/Teacher in Charge: Sue Welling
Background to PRU: Year 11 only, vocational focus

Reason for participating in Back on Track:
Restorative Approaches Workstream:

Rising fixed-term exclusions, not leading to improvement in behaviour. Offer of a focused strategy to parents when dealing with poor behaviour.

Biggest challenge:

To recognise that solution focused strategies are beneficial to all parties. Gaining co-operation from all parties. Time for implementing conferences.

Success so far:

- delivered sessions to Parents Forum
- delivered session to students
- used RA pre- and post- fixed term exclusion
- diffusing potentially violent behaviour

Head teacher tip for implementation:

Keep the item high on staff team agenda when discussing issues of behaviour management.

Contact details:

s.welling@movingonschool.co.uk

PRU Name: Victoria House

Pupils on roll: 45

Number of staff: 27 (including outreach team)

Head teacher/Teacher in Charge: Rachel Thorne

Background to PRU: Primary PRU – KS1 in off-site mainstream school, KS2 on site.

Mixture of full-time and part-time children. Also outreach intervention team working in schools.

Reason for participating in Back on Track:
Restorative Approaches workstream:

Trying to develop a more restorative approach to behaviour and develop children's awareness of impact of behaviour on themselves and others.

Biggest challenge:

Relationships between children – very low emotional literacy.

Changing roll – reintegration. High level of SEN

children awaiting SEN placements – mainly Autistic.

Success so far: Introduced circle time in all classes every day – developing the language of RA.

Started a referral system for the use of RA for recurring and serious incidents.

Head teacher tip for implementation: Celebrate success! Constant reminders – staff meetings, assemblies, displays.

Contact details:

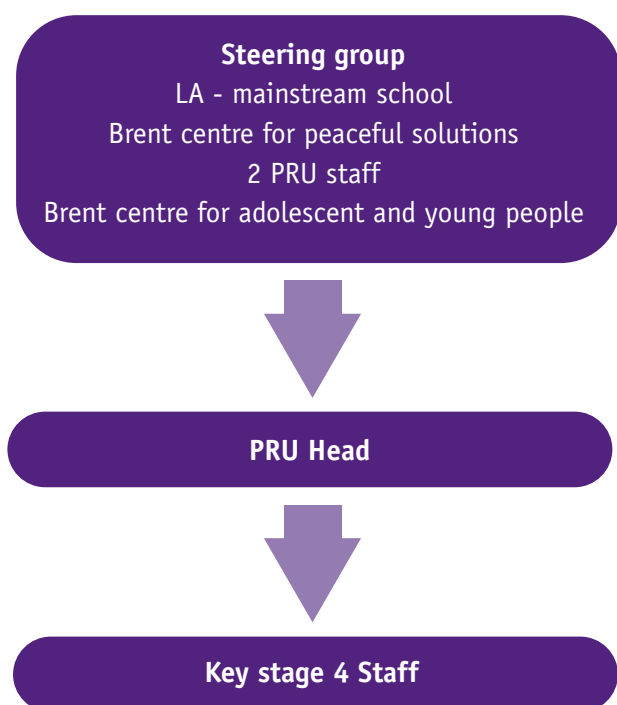
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Models of implementation

BRENT

The Brent model of implementation was to develop a small steering group to support the then new Head teacher to implement restorative approaches. Brent also used a voluntary sector organisation to do separate evaluation on emotional needs of staff.

Figure 2: Brent Steering Group Model:



The Brent PRU had been rated by OFSTED as 'Outstanding', and the Head teacher recognised that the staff team had been through significant upheaval. They were also now faced with a new Head teacher and expected to take on a new approach to behaviour management. This can lead to staff feeling vulnerable and threatened by any change, but particularly one which may seem time-consuming and unfamiliar. The Head teacher has focused on developing and supporting the staff with supervision and counselling to create a support structure for staff as they implement restorative approaches.

The introduction of restorative approaches to deal with staff-pupil conflict is always challenging. In Brent this has been used with success to repair the damage done when this relationship breaks. The impact of restorative approaches has supported the school's discipline structures. As the Head teacher indicated, this means that when asking for pupils to hand in their phones, this is based on staff having better relationships with pupils, which creates trust rather than resorting to threatening punitive sanctions as a means of getting pupils to hand in their phones.

What has happened?

Staff Training:

- almost half the staff had training in conferencing in July 2010
- all staff training Sept 2010 (1day) Jan 2011 (2 days)
- seven mainstream schools sent representatives to training
- YOT, Connexions and Local authority sent representatives to training
- Head teacher ran training in mainstream school.

Voluntary sector partnership with Centre for Peaceful Solutions: Work delivered by CPS included:

- conducted staff interviews, produced report
- facilitated RP meetings
- conducted behaviour observations
- coached staff
- supported in implementation of mobile phone rule – consulted parents, students and staff.

Brent Centre for Young People and Adolescents

- provides one day a week support
- provides counselling service for students
- provides supervision for staff (offered to all staff).

Brent Head teacher perspective:

The Head teacher recognised that the success of the Brent pilot would be based on "getting it right with

staff". To do this, the head recognised the need to build up staff resilience. As a new Head teacher coming in with a new initiative the Head teacher's perception was that "staff were comfortable with the status quo, that is, an authoritarian style of management and resistance to an approach which is compatible with the introduction of RA, as some considered it weak. She thinks "When I came here people wanted it to be what they were used to because, if it isn't authoritarian, if you're not saying "this is what we're doing, this is the way we do it, then you're not really in charge". The Head teacher used her funding for training, but also additional support mechanisms. This support is now being offered to staff in the form of "supervision", as a "space to explore it [RA] in a way that's safe". While attendance is voluntary, the Head teacher's approach is clear: "I'm not making it so people have to [do it] but I'm saying that I'm doing it, so you do it. A number of practices to support the introduction of RA with staff, namely supervision sessions and a work-based discussion group for all staff, and coaching for the SLT have been put in place to build sustainability in the PRU.

Staff training: Since the Time 1 interview, North-west PRU staff has received the 1-day training for all staff in September 2010 and the 2-day training for all staff in January 2011: "So that means that the bulk of staff have been trained in doing conferencing and all staff have had three days training and that includes two new members of staff who are quite crucial, my deputy and behaviour and attendance manager.

The staff perspective: Brent teacher interview – 26th February 2011

Teacher (T) – it was in September 2009, I think we had two initial weeks where we went off site and had training. We were initiated into the practices. The training was good.

Interviewer (I) – Since then how has it changed in the way you deal with YP?

T – It took a while for it to be intrinsic, whereas now it's very natural. A culture needs time to embed for it to come naturally. It has changed the way I ask questions and how I reflect.

I – Do you think there are particular situations that it works well for?

T – Yes, where two boys were having a fight over a period of a week, due to gang issues, you can set up a meeting to resolve the issue. When it's used more as a preventative, it works a lot better. If boys aren't getting along it's useful.

I – In terms of staff, how do you think they felt about making a shift to becoming a Restorative PRU?

T – There was natural resistance, including myself. There will always be doubt, but it was something new. There is still an element of the past, but we're incorporating. Pupils are taking responsibility for their actions and reflecting. They have to say what they did. Staff were somewhat resistant about something new, but with time it gets to grow on you and you find yourself doing the things automatically

I – In terms of staff resistance, what would you recommend to other PRUs?

T – If some senior leaders can lead on restorative practice and show the benefits on how it works, people would be more willing to get involved. If shown how it benefits them, they'll be more accepting of what can be done.

I – How have pupils responded?

I – Well, a lot less aggressively, an opportunity to off load. It's taken out the blame culture. Focus on what they were thinking at the time. They have to look at the emotional aspect of it, it's hard for them to verbalise it. A lot of the boys are big tough boys who don't show emotion.

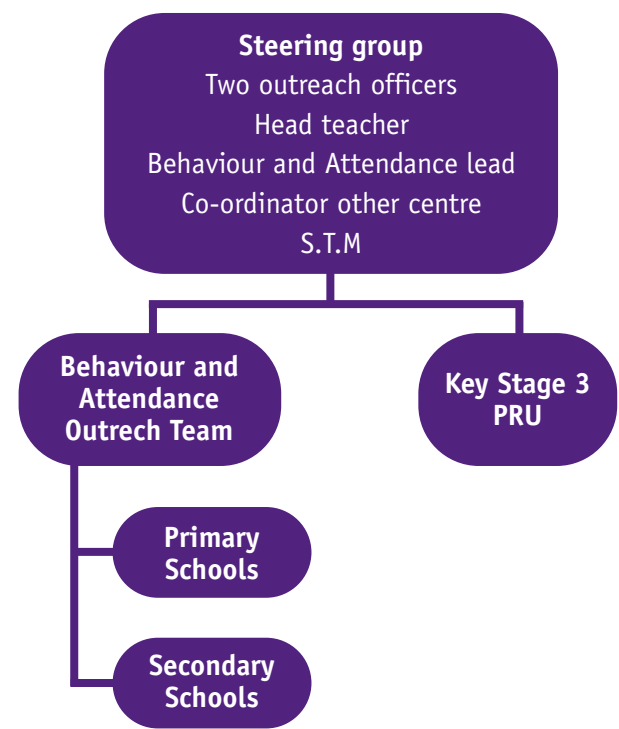
I – If there was one recommendation you'd give to heads, what would it be?

T – To give it time to grow. If the expectation is that it will change within six months, it's not going to work. It needs time to evolve into something significant. People need time to get used to the language for the fluency. It took me months to stop thinking about what to ask next. I now know how to ask the right questions. Staff need opportunity to practice, even amongst themselves, get some fluency and let it grow.

CAMDEN

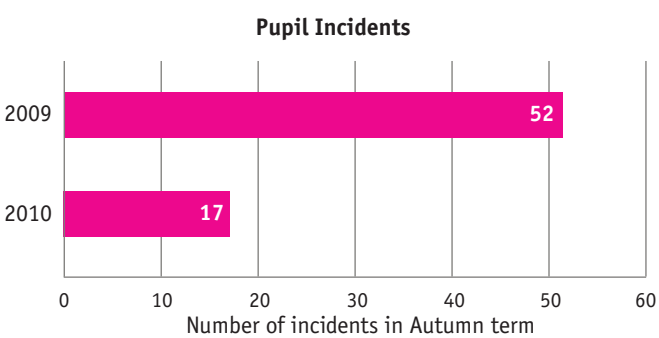
The Camden model of implementation was focused on an outreach model which would allow for roll-out into mainstream schools, as well as working with the Local Authority.

Figure 3: Camden model of implementation.



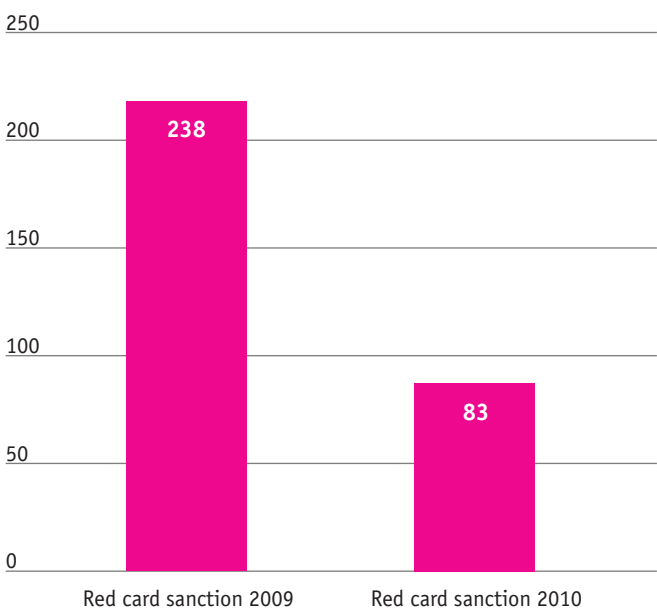
The Camden KS3 PRU from the outset was very keen to co-ordinate their in-house training with developing outreach services. The advantage of having a small but high functioning team meant staff buy-in happened very quickly. The Camden pilot also looked at the impact of restorative approaches on their present behaviour system (rewards and sanctions) as a proxy indicator. Results showed: Very significant reduction in incidents (non-exclusion) in Autumn Term 2010: 17 compared to Autumn Term 2009: 52, reduction of 67 per cent. The level of attendance also increased by 6 per cent over the same period.

Figure 4: Camden Pupil Incidents.



The use of rewards and sanctions also used a proxy indicator showed the following:

Figure 5: Use of Red Cards



This means there has been a 65 per cent reduction in the use of red cards during the autumn term. However, there has also an increase in the use of rewards (known as smilies).

Figure 6: Use of smilies.



Camden Head teacher perspective:

The Camden PRU had shown rapid progress in embedding practice within the PRU over the implementation time. In the summer term 2009/2010, having piloted the use of RA with staff who had already been trained in March 2009, the Steering Group realised that RA “needed to be embedded wholeheartedly in our practice, so we revised our behaviour policy and various other bits of policies like the anti-bullying policy”.

In addition to the staff training, two key practices were introduced to students:

1. **Circles:** Initially, a lot of time was spent in class working in circles “thinking about what we need to have a successful classroom, unpicking what needs actually mean and talking about feelings, to try and extend their [students’] vocabulary around being able to express themselves more openly”. We start the week with a circle and we close the week with a circle with all the students and all the staff together on a Monday and Friday. Our Friday assembly is now in a circle and we always have a go-round. Each class also starts the morning, first thing, with a 20-minute circle. The staff team also uses circles for meetings with the clinical psychologist.
2. **Class agreements:** After about one to two weeks of working in circles the notion of class agreements was introduced. The class agreements were based on “Brainstorming what they [each class] need in order to be able to give of their best”. Brainstorming results in about seven or eight different statements for each class, and are revised every half term. In addition, as part of the class agreement, “Each class now has a social target, a class social target, which will be something they need to do in order to achieve their class agreement”. Social targets change quite regularly, according to the behavioural needs of the students. Once the class agreements had been agreed in each tutor group, support staff introduced the “Actual restorative enquiry process - why you might do it in this way and what it means”

Outreach Support:

In terms of the wider community, the use of RA has moved out of the PRU and into local schools, as per the PRU Action Plan. For example, the Steering Group has started to work with a number of secondary schools in the borough. The Head teacher said “...we’ve rolled it out now in three of the secondary schools. So not with whole school teams because

that’s too much to ask, but with 20 or so staff at a time so we’ve been doing twilight training sessions and we’ve developed lots of resources. I mean, it’s very difficult to have a whole school doing the intensity of training that we did so we’ve developed more off the shelf, little bits of things that they can be using in schools. We know that that’s not the whole picture, but it’s a start”. In addition, the PRU has delivered training to other services, for example, “we’ve just given training to the primary learning support service and they’re developing their training to go back out to primary schools as well. So there’s quite a movement out. It certainly hasn’t just been here”.

Parents and Pupils:

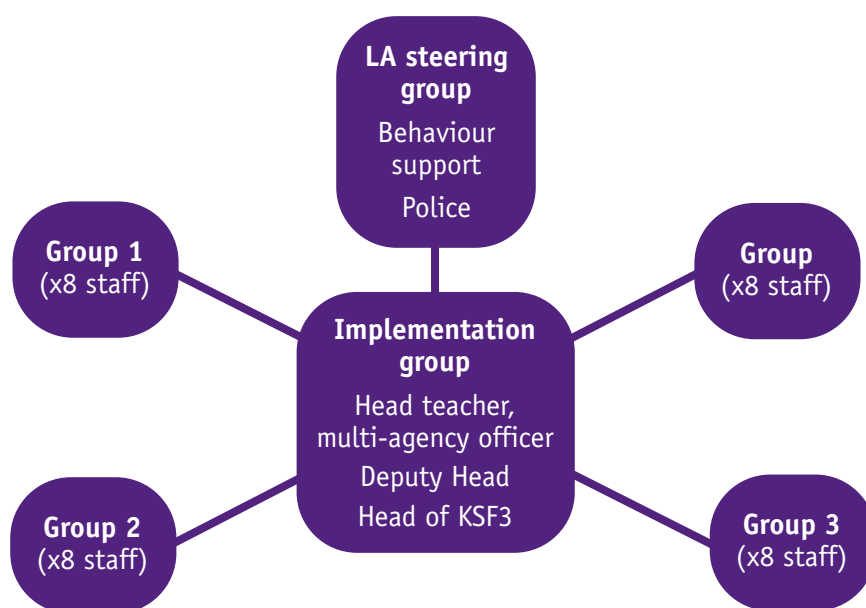
In addition, the PRU’s school home support worker has developed a leaflet and a pack on RA at home for parents and carers outlining RA and the use of restorative language. The aim of working with families is to strengthen the home/school partnership in terms of managing student behaviour, and to support the use of RA principles in the home such that the approach used in the PRU is reinforced at home. The school home support worker has also had one restorative meeting between a parent and a child. She is working with the clinical psychologist towards a restorative meeting with two parents and a child, so really using the same approaches to support parents at home.

Staff training: Once the PRU felt prepared with their policies they worked towards a launch point in September, which was to include the two-day training for the remainder of the staff. As preparation for the two-day training, staff received an introduction to RA from the Steering Group (who had previously received the five-day training), followed by a half-day training in RA with trainers from the training company. Following this, time was put aside for the staff team to think about how RA was going to be launched with the students. A launch was planned that would take place over the first two to three weeks of the autumn term 2010.

SUTTON:

The Sutton model had a multi-agency steering group, which then worked with the PRUs implementation group. The implementation group oversaw the training of four different training cohorts of staff.

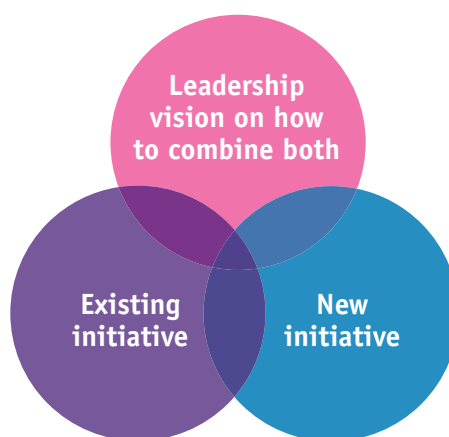
Figure 7: Sutton implementation model.



The challenge for the Sutton PRU has been to launch an initiative whilst going through a new build programme. This has meant preparing staff to put a new culture in place when the school moves.

The challenge was implementation for Sutton, which has already engaged in tackling domestic violence, which the majority of pupils have had experience of directly. This raised a challenge in marrying the existing initiative, (which staff have already spent time and energy on) with new initiatives, i.e. restorative approaches.

Figure 8: Bring initiatives together in PRUs.



Sutton Head teacher's perspective:

At the time of the interview, approximately half of the staff had received/were receiving four days' worth of training in RA. Of the staff that had been trained, the Head teacher recognised that, while some had responded more quickly than others, others will need more support: "We've acknowledged that we will be spending some of this year's money on further supervision and support from the trainer". The training has also promoted a debate among staff about how appropriate an RA approach is for a PRU. For example, the Head teacher said: "Yes, I guess it's promoting a lot of debate and continues to promote a lot of debate. Also I think sometimes they [the staff] wonder what would be that much different to what we already do. Sometimes, for some staff, there's a scare about 'this is what we're going to, we don't see this as an appropriate response in every circumstance'. There will still need to be structure and consequence and we're not saying that it's going to totally eradicate exclusion although we do not permanently exclude now".

With regard to involvement in the Back on Track project, the Head teacher identified this as a key support. She said: "It's really helpful to have someone coming in challenging your implementation by saying 'so why are you doing it like that and what's worked, what hasn't worked?' Related to this was the background information that being involved in the project provided. For example: "You know, We're not expecting to see people wafting around restoring! It is the knowledge and information that the trainer gives and the project has given us about. Actually all of the research says [it could take] 5-7 years and there's something for me about, if you're going to create a sustainable model, it's creating a bank of staff that are trained but then it's also building that into your training programm."

A spectrum of response to behaviour?

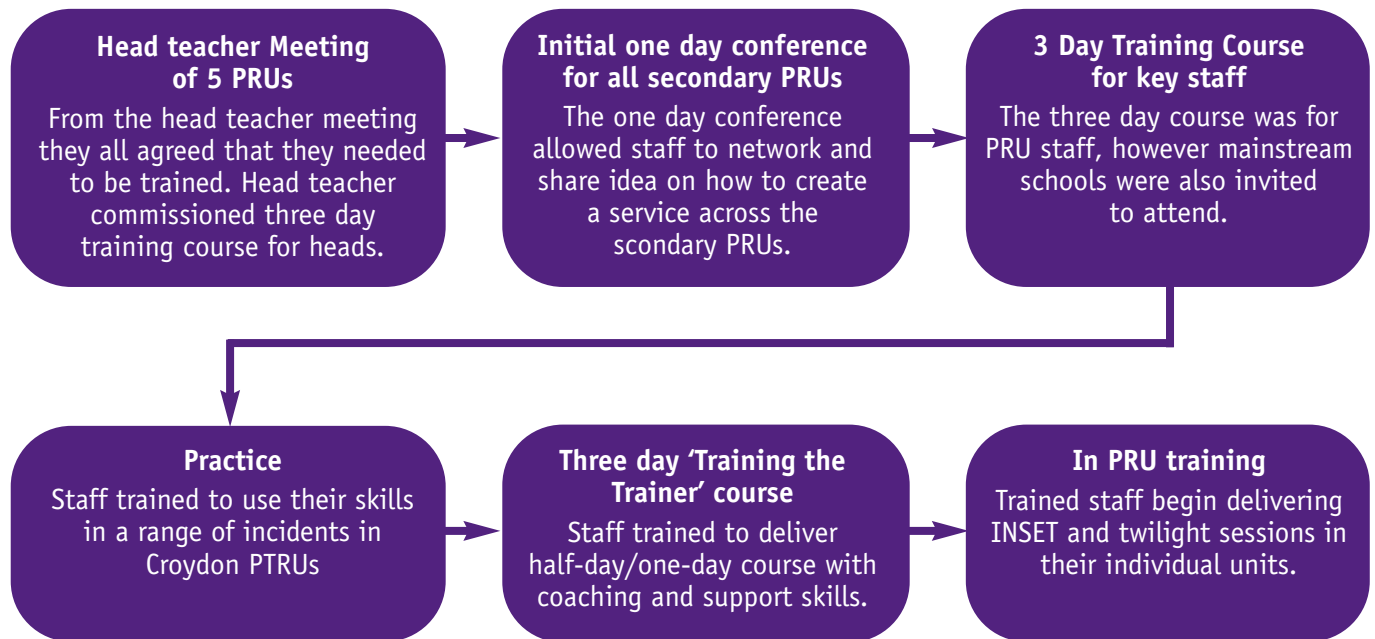
"Actually good restorative is much harder than bog standard punitive and good restorative isn't soft and fluffy and letting people off the hook. It's about both coming together and actually meeting in the middle. And good restorative I think it has got a foot in each camp because there are consequences and responsibility for behaviour. But it's also learning about and acknowledging feelings in other people in a situation and how do I learn from this and move forward and what could be different next time. All of that stuff is what a good PRU should be doing."



Croydon implementation model

The implementation of the restorative approaches project in the non-funded area was led by the five PRU Heads who were all trained before rolling this out to staff.

Figure 9: Process map of Croydon PRUs' implementation.



To develop a service model across the borough, a one-day conference was held to explain how each PRU would be developed across the secondary PRUs, which around 100 staff attended. This allowed, for the first time, networking opportunities across the PRUs and staff valued this immensely. It also identified staff who were very keen to adopt the approach and staff who were very resistant. A follow-up session was held in each PRU to discuss the day and plan further implementation. The primary PRU needed additional support and team building before they could begin training.

The next step was a three-day training course for PRU staff to develop restorative language and restorative meetings. As one member of staff said 'I didn't get it at the one-day conference, and I did not know what we were talking about on the follow-up session in the PRU, so I came on the three-day training just to be difficult, but now I get it and we need to take this back to the PRU and get all staff trained!' The training helped staff to understand through theory and practice

how they could use it in their settings when working with their pupils. The 'training for trainers' course added a second level for practitioners to develop their skills, and share practice for in-house training in their settings. Two of the five PRUs developed this model. A big challenge for staff was having enough practitioner experience and then being able to share learning as a trainer. Management of the non-funded area was done through a steering group of practitioners. However, without a designated co-ordinator, the networking and support opportunities have not been developed to create a restorative service across the five PRUs.

Funded pilot areas - staff findings

A staff questionnaire was undertaken in June 2010 (61 staff completed) and a follow-up questionnaire was conducted in February 2011 (62 staff completed). Due to the small sample size, results are to be treated as indicators only. Due to the short-time scale of the project, the questionnaire does not reflect changes over an entire academic year, but gives a snap-shot of progress.

About the PRUs:

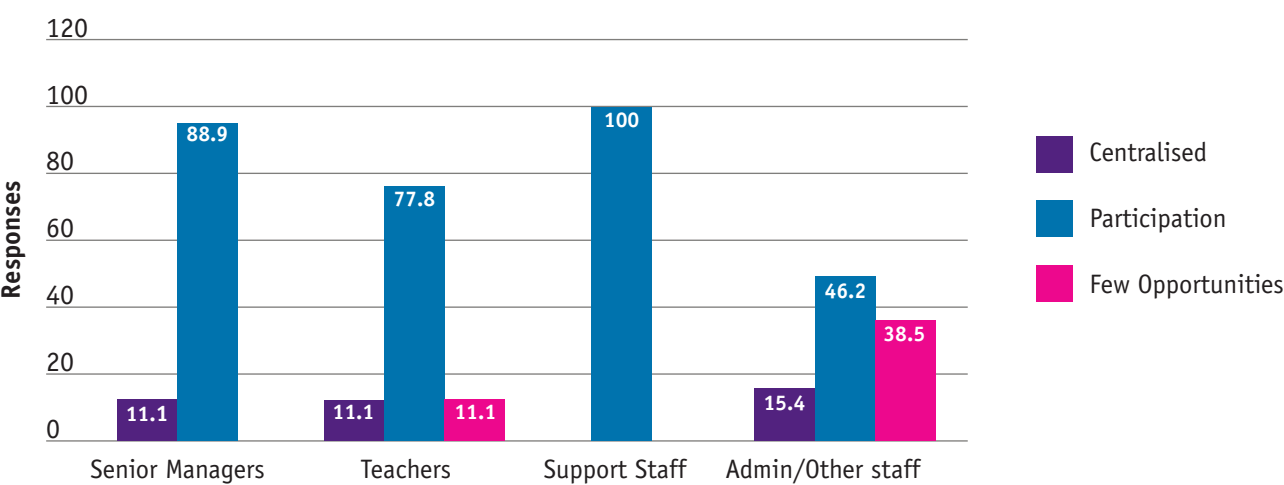
The perceptions of leadership in 2011 (Head teacher and Senior Leadership) ranged from “very poor” to “very good”, with higher proportions of teachers and administrative/other staff rating leadership as “very good” compared with other staff. In the previous year no staff had rated the leadership as very poor.

The majority of staff agreed that there was variability in the majority of students’ behaviour. However, there were differences in staff responses within job groups. For example, a small minority of teachers thought that the majority of students were “not well-behaved” or

“badly behaved” compared with others in their job group. This is compared to 2010 where a small minority of teachers though that pupils were “well-behaved”.

In terms of clarity of the PRU’s behaviour policy, responses ranged from “not very clear” to “very clear”, with more senior managers responding “very clear” compared with staff from other job groups. A minority of staff were not very clear about their PRU’s behaviour policy in both surveys. In terms of the vision of the PRUs: “A high level of participation in decision making, informal communication networks and role fluidity” best described staff’s understanding in the large majority of cases. A few senior managers, teachers and administrative/other staff viewed the vision of the PRU as “a centralised decision making process with no room for flexibility, autonomy and creativity”. And, a minority of teachers and administrative/other staff viewed the vision as lacking in opportunity for them to contribute to policy and practice.

Figure 9.1. Vision of the PRU (n = 53)



Although nearly all staff agreed with the statement “this PRU is a good place to work”, a very few “strongly disagreed” (3.3 per cent compared to 6.5 per cent in 2010).

Furthermore, over half the staff agreed with the statement that “this PRU is a safe environment” (56 per cent in 2011 compared to 63 per cent in 2010); and nearly one-third responded “strongly agree” (32 per cent in 2011 compared to 27 per cent in 2010); a few “disagreed” (12 per cent in 2011 compared to 10 per cent in 2010). However, further research would be needed to explore what staff meant by feeling safe in regard to pupils, parents, other staff, and other factors.

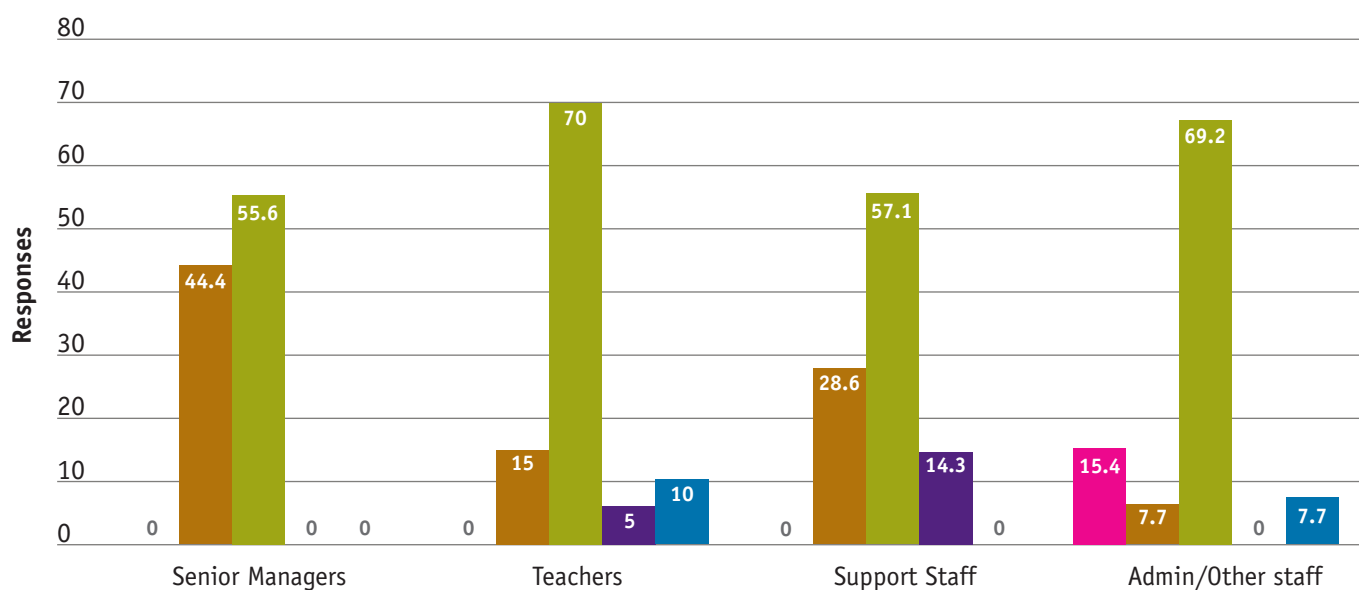
There was considerable disparity both within and between job groups regarding the best ways to handle students in conflict. For example:

- the majority of senior managers thought “punishing perpetrators” was the least efficient approach.

- the majority of senior managers and teachers thought “restorative approaches” was the most efficient approach.
- the majority of support staff thought “a clear structure of acceptable behaviour” and “restorative approaches” are the most efficient approaches.
- the majority of administrative/other staff thought “a clear structure of acceptable behaviour” was the most efficient approach.
- a minority of teachers, support staff and administrative/other staff thought “punishing perpetrators” was the least efficient approach.
- few administrative/other staff rate “restorative approaches” as efficient.

In both questionnaires, the majority staff stated that pupils’ behaviour varies. This is not surprising because of the nature of PRUs. However, further research on how pupils’ behaviour changes over time in a restorative PRU was beyond the time limits of this project.

Figure 9.2. Ratings of the behaviour of the majority of students most of the time by job group (n = 56)



- Well-behaved
- Quite well-behaved
- Behaviour varies
- Not well-behaved
- Badly behaved

Types of conflict

*Summary of types of conflict
staff feel most confident
dealing with* **Job Group**

	Types of conflict in 2010	Types of conflict in 2011
Senior Managers	Conflict among students; any; eclectic – variable, depends on situation; all types; student conflicts; staffing issues; anti-establishment behaviour - rules; students not following code of conduct; conflict between staff opinion	All; any situation; classroom/ minor conflicts - some serious incidents; most types – physical violence less so
Teachers	Conflict within the classroom; conflict outside classroom with support from other staff; arguments; all types; student conflict; any; verbal arguments; escalation of anger; staff/student conflict	Any!; between pupil/pupil and pupil/staff member; classroom conflict; diffusing conflict before escalation; disruptive behaviour; most; motivating student to start work; no conflict bothers me; physical altercations
Support staff	Conflict among students; family conflict; any conflict; arguments; behavioural; conflict between students and staff; non-physical conflict; not wanting to go to lessons; between students; any; one-to-one (not groups); arguments between young people	Confrontation; verbal and physical; disagreement between pupils; kids; most
Administrative/other staff	Don't understand the question; group or one-to-one; conflict with parents	Any; between staff members; children or young people (they're not really children) being disruptive or disrespectful; parent/child conflict

In response to the question “How confident are you in dealing with conflict in your PRU?”, over one-third of staff responded “OK” (37 per cent compared to 50 per cent in 2010) and over half replied “very” (57 per cent compared to 40 per cent in 2010). Very few responded “not at all” (3 per cent) or “not sure” (3 per cent compared to 9 per cent in 2010).

Restorative Approaches in the Pilot Areas:

In terms of how much staff would say that they knew about restorative approaches, knowledge ranged from “nothing” to “a lot”. Overall, teachers and support staff had more knowledge about restorative approaches than staff from other job groups. Administrative/other staff had the least knowledge.

Staff results showed that over the period of implementation they became more involved in restorative meetings, senior management participation had increased by 11 per cent, Teachers by 7 per cent, Administrative and Support staff by 39 per cent only support staff had decreased in participation.

Figure 10. Percentage of staff who have participated in a restorative approach by job group (n = 59) 2010

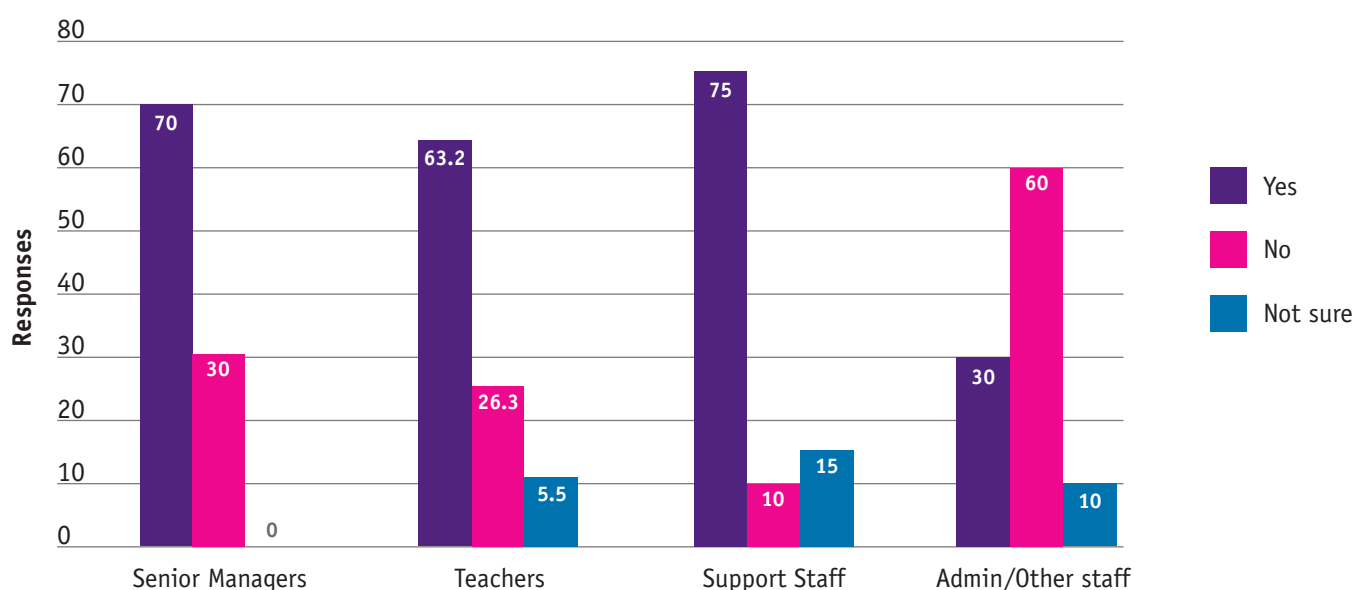
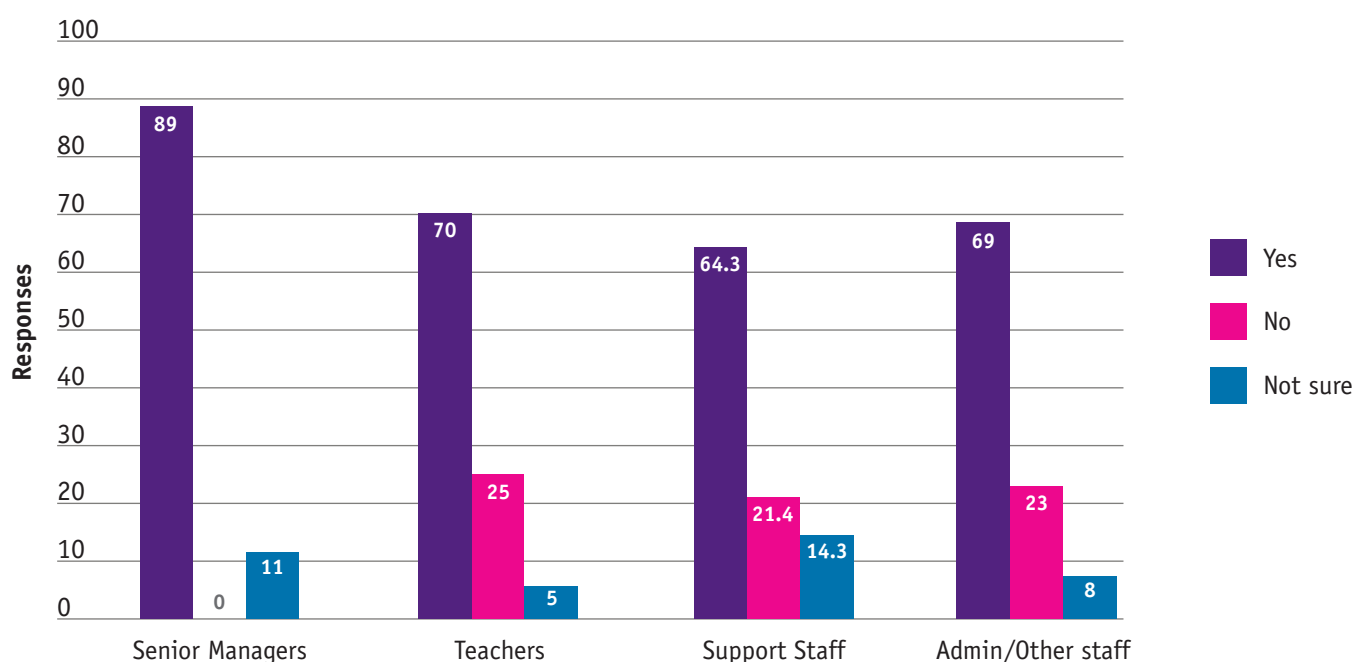
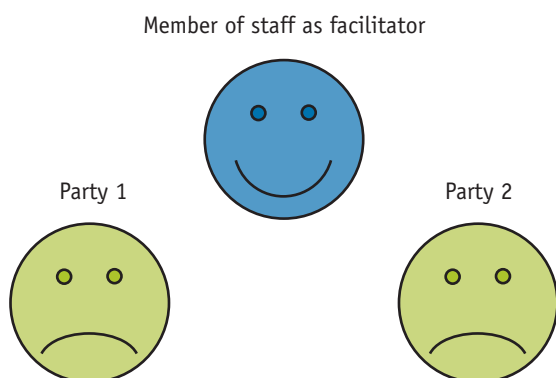


Figure 11. Percentage of staff who have participated in a restorative approach by job group (n = 56) 2011



A key feature of restorative approaches is the restorative meeting; this is most often between the two main parties in conflict. Staff were asked in the questionnaire how confident they would be to act as facilitator when dealing with conflict:



Do you feel confident to facilitate/act as a mediator in a restorative meeting?

Job Group	Feelings of confidence (2011 Response)
Senior Managers	If I had some practice, I would willingly get involved in a restorative meeting; not sure; not yet; think there are more qualified, experienced in this specific area than teachers; yes
Teachers	No; not quite yet but if I observed part of one first I would – need to brush up; yes
Support staff	Fairly; possibly – more practice; yes “very”
Administrative/Other	No – no training received; no, unless attended training; training then I will; would need to get more experience at it to feel more confident; yes

The confidence of staff in the 2010 survey was largely dependent on having been trained. The need for training to facilitate skills and process is seen as a major boost to confidence. Particularly important in training is opportunities to watch and participate as a restorative facilitator. Staff specifically mentioned the use of role-play with some really ‘enjoying’ the opportunity, whereas other members of staff ‘dread’ acting in front of colleagues. However, the majority of staff acknowledged that role-playing as facilitator was necessary to help with learning the restorative process and receiving feedback on restorative practice.

However, the 2011 results show that training is not enough, unless supported by opportunities to practice. The knowledge of restorative approaches can become theoretical, or worse be forgotten, as school staff cannot build up experience through practice.

Participation in restorative meetings:

Staff participation with pupils:

Staff participation in restorative meetings was highest when working with pupils. The confidence of staff increased across the board, but particularly when harmed by a pupil or as a support of the pupil. It is always difficult to acknowledge when teachers may have caused harm to a pupil, but after restorative approaches training, there was an increase of 24 per cent to meet with pupil.

Staff participation with parents:

The challenge of working with parents in PRUs is often harder than mainstream as parents may have had poor relationships with the excluding school or school they have left. PRU staff have to work hard to build trust with parents, and this can be particularly difficult when a conflict arises between a parent and member of staff. These conflicts can also undermine the relations between pupil and staff. Staff willingness to participate in a restorative meeting with parents increased in confidence post training. See figure 13 below.

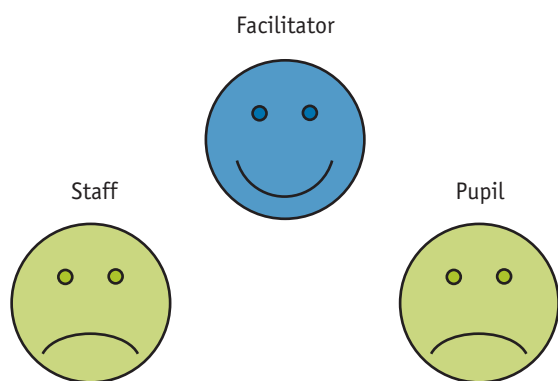


Figure 12: Staff Participation with pupils.

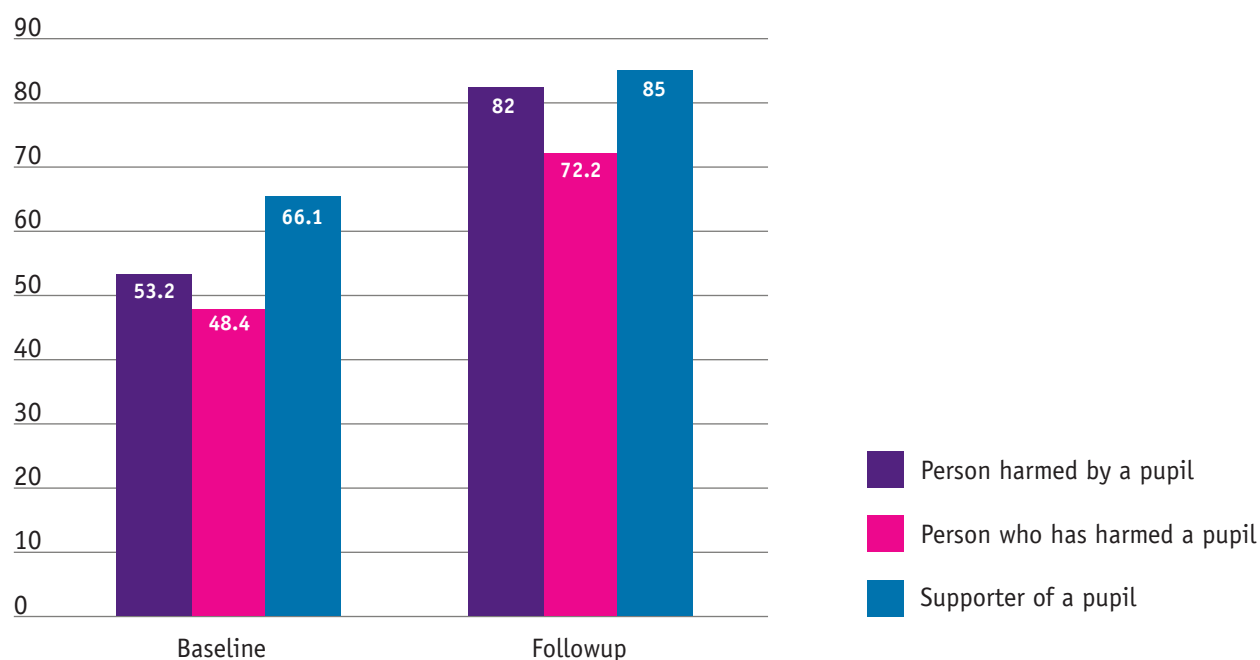


Figure 13: Staff Participation with parents.

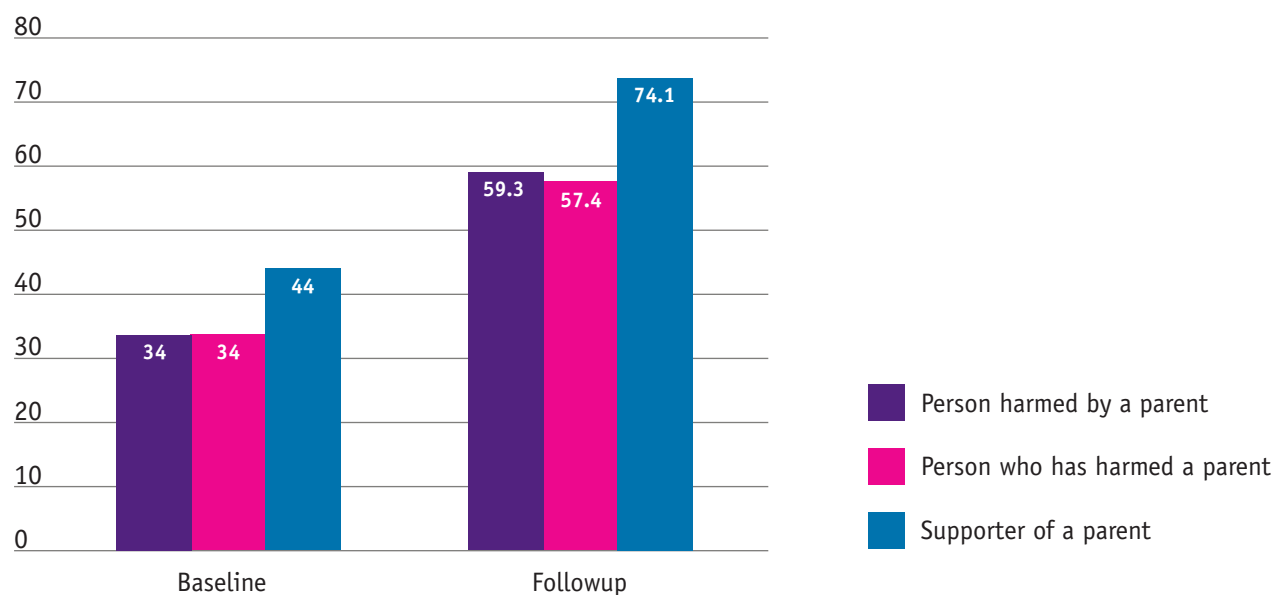
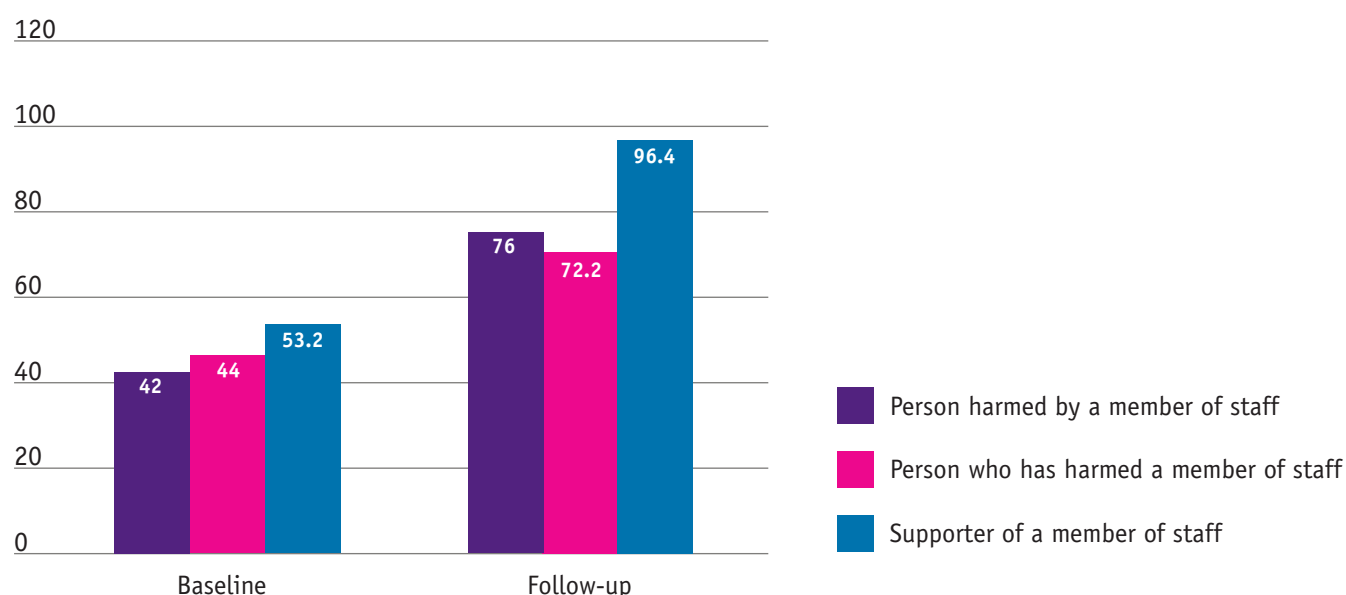


Figure 14: Staff participation with other members of staff.



The results show a 25 per cent increase in staff willingness to participate as a person harmed by a parents. A 23 per cent increase in staff willingness to participate as the person who harmed the parent, and a 30 per cent increase in willingness to support a parent in a restorative meeting.

Staff participation with other members of staff:

Restorative approaches are often seen as a pupil focused approach. However, staff also identified positive benefits to improve adult relationships within PRUs. Restorative Approaches may add value to both line-management process and add value to grievance processes by creating a collaborative approach to resolving staff conflict.

Staff willingness to participate as person harmed by another member of staff increased by 34 per cent. As the person who has caused harm to another member of staff by 30 per cent. Staff willingness to support a member of staff increased by 43 per cent. These increases highlight the need for PRUs to consider the implications restorative approaches as a human resource strategy for managing conflict and disputes between staff, specifically post-training as this will clarify the non-adversarial nature of such meetings to resolving conflict and disputes.

In the non-funded area

The baseline survey showed a similar pattern, before training less than half of the staff would engage with a parent who had harmed them in 2010; in 2011 this was increased by 21 per cent. The area of most significant positive increase in restorative meetings was in staff relationships across the board as harmed (37 per cent) as harmer (36 per cent) and as a supporter (28 per cent).

Figure 15: Non-funded area willingness to participate in restorative meetings 2010.

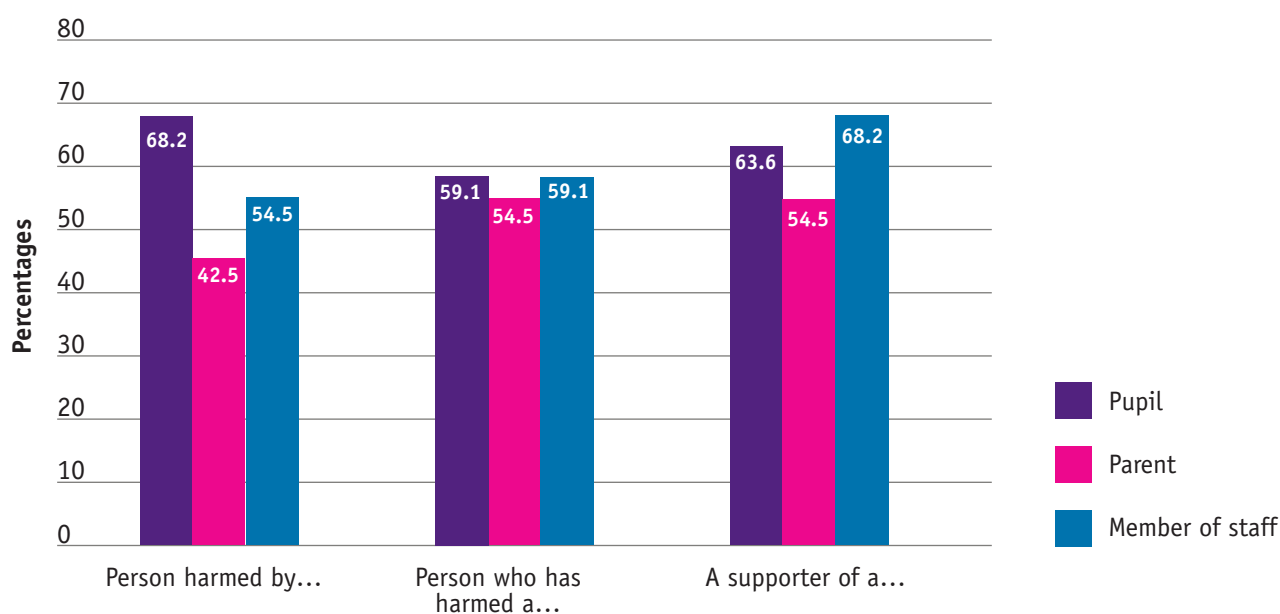
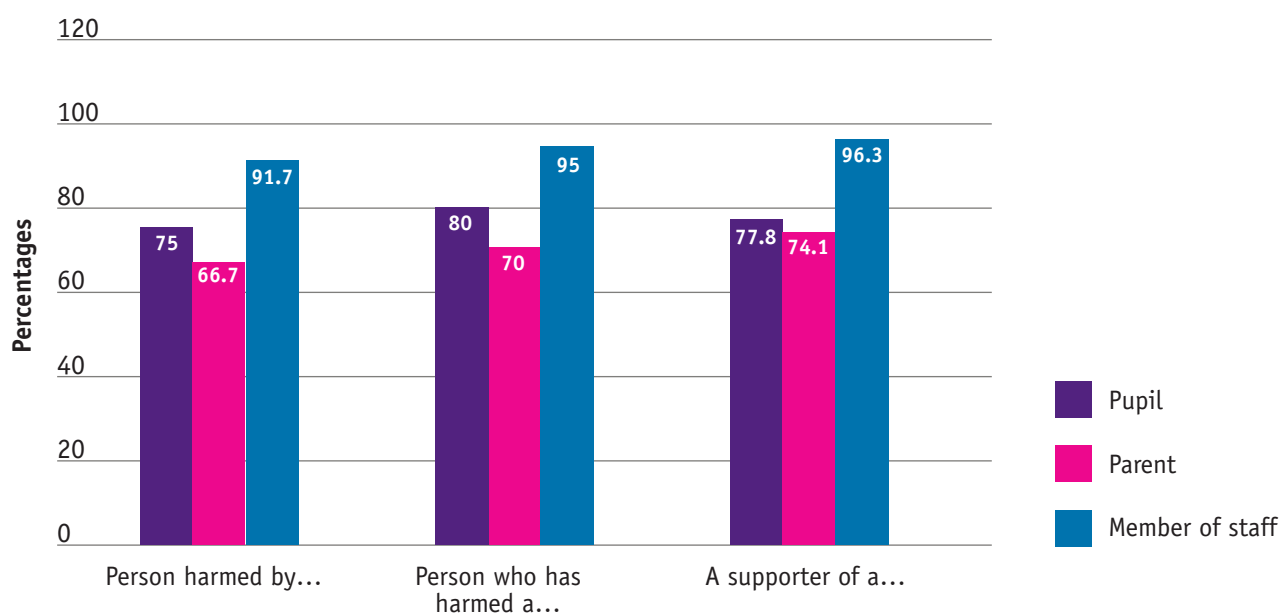


Figure 16: Non-funded area willingness to participate in restorative meetings 2011.



Staff focus group

The staff focus group constituted staff from all three pilot areas sharing their perspectives with the interviewer on how the project had gone. The summary of the discussion follows:

- All staff reported that the implementation of Restorative Approaches in their PRU has had a positive impact on student behaviour, staff response to behaviour and the general atmosphere in the setting. The biggest impact was felt to be in the type of communication that now happens in their setting. Staff and some students now use different language, there is more dialogue and students are given a voice and heard.
- All settings are now using circles with students for a variety of functions. Getting all staff on board was felt to be one of the biggest challenges, with all staff receiving the same training presented as a way of maximizing staff engagement.
- Another challenge was students' low level of emotional literacy; it was felt to be important to explicitly teach students the skills and language required to engage with restorative processes.



Challenges for staff:

Time

Some settings have set aside a fixed time of the day for restorative meetings to happen (e.g. at the end of the school day). Other settings have a named member of staff responsible for restorative meetings each day. The timing of the intervention is an important factor; it can be useful to allow some time for things to calm down before trying to engage the students or staff in a restorative process.

Pupil engagement

There was some frustration at how little students contribute in the circles. Some students appear to consider themselves too tough to talk about needing or feeling anything.

Size

If certain 'cool' students do not contribute, this tends to inhibit other students from contributing. It was mentioned that it is the language of needs and emotions that may be the obstacle. The size of the PRU appears to be a factor in how quickly and how widespread the approach can be implemented. In smaller PRUs it has been easier to train all staff more quickly and so ensure that all staff are on board. In larger PRUs the training cycle is inevitably slower and this can stall progress as some staff are working in this new way and other staff are awaiting training. It is easier in smaller settings for this to more quickly become the way of working of the whole staff team.

Quotes from the session

I think it's been one of the best initiatives that I've ever seen implemented. It's just permeated through the whole thing. It's changed our way of working. Because the training was so effective everybody got on board.

Teachers are taking more ownership of problems that are happening in their classrooms rather than just pushing it to senior leadership.

Teachers are finding out more about their pupils' lives by asking these questions.

You're trying to develop a culture and you don't turn the page of a book and develop a culture; it needs to nurture, it needs to grow.

Give it time. It's a culture and you need time for it to develop. If you work in an environment, like we all do, that's very confrontational there isn't a better approach to take away the tension.

Kids have started taking ownership of what they've done and realising that what they've done wasn't right.

(In staff-pupil meetings) Staff may have made a mistake, like we all make mistakes, and sort of accepted that, have recognised where they were going wrong, and that's been a very valuable experience.

The fact that you have a tight system gives you the security of knowing, look, no matter what you do, we have a way of dealing with this and you're not going to shift us.

Advice for other PRUs

Staff offered the following advice to PRUs looking at implementing Restorative Approaches:

- all staff must be trained so that there is a common understanding and in order to avoid splits among the staff team
- the training must stay with staff, so will need to be continually revisited
- visit other PRUs to learn from their experience
- give it time
- Train the young people
- put Restorative Approaches into the admissions/induction process so that students are aware from the outset that this is how we work
- aim to use the approach proactively – it is not just about responding to conflict, it is also about preventing conflict.

Trainers' perspective: Transforming conflict

The three pilot areas decided to jointly commission one training organisation, a number of organisations tendered for this opportunity. This report does not recommend any training organisation. The training company was asked to make observations from the trainers' perspective to inform the final report.

Pre-training

Establish a Steering Group comprising senior management and representatives from key partnership agencies and local schools at the outset. This group should be involved in shaping the course, take part in training themselves and ensure that monitoring and evaluation procedures are in place even before the training commences so that base-line data is in place.

Establish a short and a long term strategy for implementation, but recognise that the needs of the individual PRU will change as the training progresses and staff start to practice the approaches

Encourage the senior leadership team to invite and respond to any fears and concerns from the staff.

- positively embrace their fears and concerns
- outline what the training will involve
- share the vision
- discuss the positive benefits for the students and staff, and Invite contributions
- ensure that everyone is aware when the training will be taking place
- identify the most appropriate people to be trained first.

All this will help staff link the training to current practice and will support the actual training- sometimes a lot of time can be wasted in the first few training groups if staff on those first training groups need a lot of convincing that this is the approach for them or that it is even going to work. It is important therefore to first train 'the champions' i.e. those enthused and those that are already working this way and would welcome an opportunity to develop their skills.

Training issues:

Train the Head teacher and the senior leadership team first so that they can:

- ensure new policies and procedures are in place to support the staff as practice changes, or give permission for staff to manage behaviour in a way that may not be currently written in the current policies (without these changes staff will be in breach of policy)
- model a 'restorative' leadership style in the way they deal with staff and students
- offer appropriate supervision
- work restoratively with parents, governors and outside agencies
- liaise with other agencies and ensure consistency
- liaise with partnership schools to ensure consistency.

Provide suitable training venues with enough space for a circle of chairs and either enough room to break out into smaller groups, or with smaller break-out rooms in order for skills practice to take place.

Post training

Unless those trained are supported and coached on a regular basis after the training only a very small percentage of those trained will successfully integrate restorative ways of working into their practice, and maintain this restorative practice over time.

Each senior management team should plan a coaching/supervision programme for individual staff to follow up the initial training. Individuals could be encouraged to keep a reflective diary, recording restorative conversations, interventions etc. this could form the basis of a regular supervision session. If individuals are not able, ready or willing to develop restorative practice these sessions could identify what they need in order to become so.

Pupils' perspectives



The pupil interviews were conducted across all three pilot areas. The pupil interviews are revealing on how well pupils understand the restorative approaches initiative in their setting. The interviews ranged from Year 8 to Year 11 pupils. Interview techniques were one-to-one, pairs and a focus group.

All pupils across the three pilots agreed that their PRUs are safe places. Environmental factors such as security helped them to feel safe, but the key-factors for safety were having friends and the teaching staff. In one PRU it was clear that all pupils distrusted the police and did not feel they are a factor to keep them safe, only one pupil reported direct involvement with the police.

When questioned about being in a PRU, pupils first response was often that they don't trust anyone. However when this was explored further they often identified two members of staff who they trusted. However, pupils felt that the members of staff they trusted were sometimes used as part of the behaviour management 'They get the nice people - nice people put pressure on you'.

The use of restorative approaches by the pupils varied across the pilot areas. In Brent, two pupils who had recently been through a restorative meeting with their parents and staff said the meeting was fair because everyone got their points across, for a pupil in Sutton it was because teachers listened to both sides of the story :

Interviewer: Why is that important? (teachers treating you fairly).

Pupil: To make the right decision on who started something or how to punish properly.

Interviewer: What do you mean by punish you properly?

Pupil: It depends on what you've done. If done something small, you wouldn't have over the top punishment.

Interviewer: What would be over the top for something small?

Pupil: Three day exclusion.

Interviewer: What about in primary or secondary?

Pupil: If someone I was with had done something, I'd also get the blame and that wasn't fair. This was both in primary and secondary school.

For pupils in the Camden PRU, when asked do you know what a restorative meeting is? All pupils replied: 'Ahhhhhhh all the time with the restorative meetings'

The main reason for having a meeting would be 'for a fight or something' and 'staff want to hear both sides of the story'.

The process of getting to resolution was also important as one pupil commented: "You're not arguing or shouting at each other. You'd agree what to do in the future. For example, if someone says, 'I don't want you near me', you agree to try your best to avoid them. Someone suggests something and you decide - agree or don't agree."

For pupils in PRUs getting to a resolution depended on two factors:

1. were we friends before the conflict, and
2. do we want to sort things out.

All pupils agreed that they would be happy to go to a meeting where it involved a friend because 'that does resolve stuff'. As one pupil put it 'If I hate them (other pupil) not going - if a fam (friend) then would not mind. Post-meeting, one pupil said you can tell it was sorted because 'we'd play football'

All pupils interviewed were asked 'what advice would you give Head teachers thinking about using restorative approaches to deal with conflict or bullying', these are the responses:

Pupil A: I wouldn't give them any advice, I don't like talking to them; in mainstream I got annoyed talking to them so I don't bother.

Pupil B: I'd ask parents to come in and get points across. At first it was tense but then after a while we got to say what we wanted to say.

Pupil C: To understand it from both sides, something must have happened to start it off.

Pupil D: Don't ask students to tell them names, tell them what happened but no names.



Findings and recommendations



Restorative Approaches begins as a pupil-centred approach. For those embarking on using restorative approaches dealing with pupils' behaviour and conflict is the main goal. However, our work across the all the PRUs shows building staff confidence has benefits to working with parents, but also improving staff confidence in managing workplace conflict.

From the perspective of the Steering Group it is important that PRUs recognise their capacity to adopt an initiative - restorative or otherwise (see readiness criteria). Getting the starting conditions right means that successful implementation permeates the organisation's culture and management structure, without having to trouble shoot problems later in the development process.

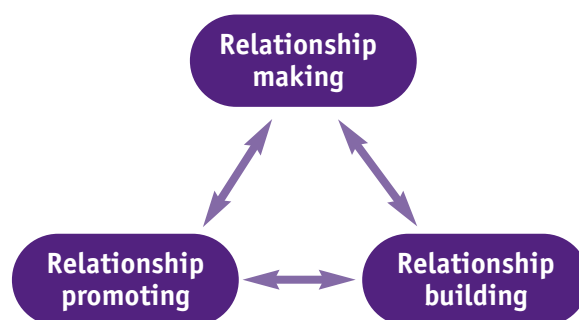
The importance of a whole community approach to restorative approaches highlights the need for the leadership of the school to offer supervision and training to staff to build confidence. This enables restorative practitioners to gain confidence in working with other members of staff and parents in conflict situations.

Restorative Approaches is often seen as a behaviour-management tool. However the BoT PRUs showed that they are developing a wider understanding based on the concept of relationships. Based on the peace work of Kathy Bickmore (*Social Education* 75, (1), pages 42-46, 2011) Often restorative approaches are aimed at

relationship-making process where pupils, staff and/or parents are in direct conflict; such as bullying or gang behaviour, it is at this point that a restorative meeting is used to repair the harm caused and prevent its reoccurrence in the future.

However, the KS3 used circle-time process at the start of the day as part of their **relationship-promoting** practice to prevent conflict occurring by promoting co-operation, shared values and team-building. This also highlights opportunities for the early identifying of potential conflicts. The South PRU and the non-funded-pilot-area have started developing parent workshops on restorative approaches linking into the relationship-building which support other processes in the wider community to develop relationships, particularly post an incident such as building better parent and community relationships with the PRU.

Figure 17: Relationship and conflict matrix (based on Bickmore 2011).



The introduction of restorative approaches has a profound effect on the organisational structure of PRUs. The need for PRUs to address their organisational structure to implement restorative approaches, with its emphasis on listening, empowered and collective responsibility means – redesigning referral systems, timetables and policies. This has implications for how PRUs will implement the change based on their present leadership models and organisational culture. Experience in both mainstream and PRUs shows that restorative approaches is least effective when individual practitioners work in isolation from both colleagues and lack of capacity within the organisational structure.

Restorative Approaches and the spectrum of behaviour in PRUs:

Restorative Approaches has been used in a wide variety of incidents to tackle the types of behaviour PRUs face on a daily basis. The case-studies at the back of this report show how staff have used their skills to meet the needs of young people in conflict. The suitability of restorative approaches was for each PRU in the pilot to decide, whether no restrictions were to be put in place, or to allow the use of restorative approaches to meet the spectrum of behaviour met in PRUs. The implementation of training and the confidence of staff to use the approach have grown over the life of the project. It is therefore a decision for each PRU to decide when best to use restorative approaches, based on level of skill and training and the ability of staff, in conjunction with the creativity to adapt the process to meet the needs of pupils, parents and the school community.

Staff development:

The implementation of restorative approaches has shown that the buy-in of staff is crucial to the successful implementation of restorative approaches. The pilot areas have all shown the various challenges of building staff capacity. Including:

- the emotional development of staff
- staff resistance to a new initiative
- uncertainty of leadership's expectations
e.g. multi-initiatives at once
- rolling out training to large PRUs
- the challenge of time.

Allowing staff the opportunity to discuss their concerns and fears is central to the later adoption of the approach; all PRUs met some level of staff resistance, but welcomed the challenge. The benefits to staff in building their capacity and confidence to meet the challenges of pupils, needs to be supported at a strategic level, particularly on-going reflective practice. Not everyone will understand the benefits of restorative approaches or the skills needed to use it first time; each PRU developed ways to support and coach other members of staff to grow their own knowledge base.

The use of restorative approaches to improve workplace relationships is a development that PRUs can utilise to explore the importance of getting the staff relationship in a strong and supportive place, when faced with high levels of need from pupils. The ability to manage and resolve staff conflict indicates that PRUs should see restorative approaches as appropriate for managing human resources as well as a pupil-focused approach.

Since the evaluation:

Although the three pilot areas were funded, the non-funded pilot showed what can be achieved by having the right knowledge. All the pilots have helped develop stepping stones for the PRUs across London who wish to develop their own restorative practice. However, just because the evaluation has stopped does not mean the PRUs have. All PRUs were interested in working with mainstream schools to prevent exclusions, manage moves and re-integrate pupils. The PRUs were also keen to develop awareness with mainstream schools of the skills and process of restorative approaches through training on INSET and Twilight sessions. The pilot areas were keen to develop parent training to help their parents manage conflict at home. All the areas are in the process of developing a restorative policy to formalise their learning and practice.

Recommendations:

Implementation:

1. PRUs to use readiness criteria to assess their ability to implement restorative approaches
2. The senior leadership of PRUs to recognise that restorative approaches require a strategic commitment and resources for effective culture change; this will not happen over-night. Each pilot created a steering group to oversee the development both in PRU and across PRUs.

3. Staff resistance can be overcome by explaining the benefits of restorative approaches, involving staff in the process, and helping staff understand how it links to other initiatives in the PRU.
4. Recognition that successful adoption from training to practice is based on staff confidence. Strengthening the emotional resilience of staff when dealing with conflict can include addressing their own emotional needs, before they are ready to confidently use restorative approaches.
5. PRU identify and select suitable training organisations. The pilot PRUs were specific in commissioning trainers that understood the needs and challenges of PRUs. PRUs to have a selection criteria in place for commissioning restorative

Post-Training:

6. Post-training staff having their first restorative meeting with pupils in conflict should, where possible, use the approach with friends in conflict. Pupils identified this as being very useful. This will also help to build staff confidence in using the approach.
7. Post-training support mechanisms for staff to further build capacity and confidence can include one-to-one and group supervision, learning journals, pupil and parent feedback, coaching and mentoring.
8. Restorative Approaches can be used for the spectrum of behaviour in PRUs. It is up to each PRU to decide where and when to use the approach. Nevertheless, the relationship and conflict matrix highlights the preventative and post-incident use of restorative approaches when considering when to use a restorative approach.

Restorative case studies from the Pupil Referral Units

Back on Track: Brent

Name of school: Brent KS4 PRU

Facilitator(s): Janis Mahony

Question 1: What happened?

Student A had kicked the glass on the English door and the glass had broken. There did not appear to be any reason why he had done this and he was saying that it was an accident. The English teacher felt that he had done it to impress another student.

Question 2: How was the incident referred to you?

I was told that the window of the English door had been broken by student A. I met with student A who told me it was an accident.

Question 3: What preparation do you have to do?

I spoke to the student, his mother and the teacher. I asked his mother to come in with him the next day and explained that we would have a meeting to look for the way forward and that student A would be expected to find a way to put things right, that he could be excluded, but what we wanted is for him to take responsibility for his actions. I also made sure that the meeting would take place when the English teacher could attend and asked him to be honest about his thoughts and feelings at the meeting.

Question 4: What restorative approach did you use?

Restorative conference

Question 5: What happened at the meeting?

Student A said that he had kicked the door by accident and that he had not intended to break it. The English teacher described what had happened and how shocked he was as there appeared to be no reason why student A had done it. Student A then said that he had been bored in the lesson. I then said that if I was the teacher I would find this very difficult as it was blaming the teacher. It then came out that student A had been engaged in the lesson and that he had not found the lesson boring. His mother then spoke about how she found it very difficult as he often did impulsive things like this and it made it very difficult for her to trust him. What became clear is that he did not know why he

had kicked the door and was unable to describe what he was thinking or feeling at the time.

The student was able to see who had been affected by his actions, and also to accept responsibility for his actions. When it came to how we could move forward together he said that he would pay for the damage. This was obviously not possible as he did not have the money to do so. I, his mother and the English teacher all said that what we wanted was for him to be able to understand why he did these things.

Question 6: Did any key moment happen to bring the parties together or keep them apart?

The discussion about why he did these things and the realisation that he could not tell us why and did not understand himself.

Question 7: Did the meeting find a resolution? If so what was it?

The agreement from the meeting was that student A would pay £15 out of the £20 he had towards the repair, that he would help the English teacher tidy the English room for three lunch times and that he would go to the counsellor at least once to see if that could help him to understand his action.

Question 8: How have things been since the meeting?

Student A did keep to the agreement – with some resistance. The English teacher was really pleased with the result (he had initially felt that student A should have been excluded). The student's parent has been able to tell us a little more about his background and has shared some very personal information that I do not think she would have been able to without the meeting. Student A did go to the counsellor once and we continue to encourage him to do so again. There is a greater understanding in the staff team of the student, and a more concerted effort to try to get him to understand himself

Question 9: What benefits were there of using this approach for the people involved?

The benefit for everyone was hearing student A take responsibility without saying that it was someone else's fault or that he had not really kicked the door.

Question 10: What benefits were there for the school?

The English teacher was far more involved in this process than he would have been if it had been a simple referral and was able to feel supported in challenging the student's statement that he had kicked the door because he was bored in the lesson.

Question 11: Would you do anything differently next time

If I had known sooner I would have met with the English teacher at the time and explained how we were going to move it forward.

Back on Track: Case – study, Brent

Name of school: Brent KS4 PRU, Poplar Grove
Facilitator(s): Maria Arpa and David Ellis

Question 1: What happened?

There had been an incident where a group of five boys and one girl. It was almost the end of the academic year and students were in high spirits. The boys chased the girl into a corridor and turned off the lights. They were followed by staff and told to move away. The girl then said that she had been assaulted by the boys and one had put their hand down her trousers. The boys denied this but did admit that they had grabbed her and that they felt they were only playing.

Question 2: How was the incident referred to you?

I had been there and moved everybody on, a few minutes later I was called to the offsite manager's office where the girl was waiting and she told me what had happened. I then met with each of the boys and wrote down their account of the incident.

Question 3: What preparation do you have to do?

I initially spoke to the girl's mother, who was very open to a restorative approach. I explained to her what had happened and that I felt that I should exclude the boys. She had spoken to her daughter, and felt that, while the boys had stepped over a barrier, she did not want me to exclude them, and would prefer to address the boys directly.

The next day was not a day where the students were due in school. This gave me time to talk to all of the students and their parents. I was clear with the parents

of the boys that something had happened, but that no one was very clear what, and that what we wanted to do was to have a conversation with everyone involved and to seek a way forward. They all agreed to this.

We also involved our chair of management committee who works at the Brent Centre for Peaceful Solutions, and asked her to facilitate the process.

Question 4: What restorative approach did you use?

We used a restorative circle.

Question 5: What happened at the meeting?

The circle was facilitated by the chair of the management committee. Only three of the boys turned up with their parents or another adult. The girl did not attend and her mother spoke first. I then spoke about my concerns. Initially the boys were unwilling to take part, it was only when they became convinced that they were not being blamed that they opened up. They felt that what was only mucking about had been taken too seriously and that the girl was getting them into trouble, that she had been mucking about as much as them. The adults that were with them also spoke, and supported the view of the girl's mother that while this had started as mucking about it had gone too far.

Question 6: Did any key moment happen to bring the parties together or keep them apart?

The mother of the girl was very clear that she was as concerned about what could happen to the boys as she was about her daughter. This allowed the boys and the adults with them to take part and to take some responsibility for what had happened rather than minimising it.

Question 7: Did the meeting find a resolution? If so what was it?

The boys and their parents apologised to the girl's parent. The boys also recognised that as there are almost three times as many boys as girls at the PRU, it not only made the girls more vulnerable but also themselves. They recognised their own responsibility in ensuring that they were not open to this type of accusation but recognising the changing boundaries and expectations on them as young men. There was agreement that the boys needed to have some opportunity to talk about their responsibilities as young men and that this could be done through PSHE. It was also agreed that they would not carry the incident on when school started again. What was particularly helpful

was having the brother of one of the young men there, as otherwise the only adults would have been women and this would have not allowed the boys views and feelings to have been heard so well.

Question 8: How have things been since the meeting?

The girl has been able to return without any bad feeling or intimidation from the boys, and has a developed a good friendship with one of the young men. Her mother felt that she would be safe at the PRU because she had met the young men involved and their mothers. The boys who were initially very defensive and unwilling to engage have not shown any anger towards the girl. Their parents were supportive of the PRU, and have more readily engaged when we ask them to.

Question 9: What benefits where there of using this approach for the people evolved?

By using this approach everyone was heard and felt safe. The boys were able to take responsibility without feeling blamed or labelled. The parents were all pleased with the process and were able to support the PRU and the girl. At the end of the meeting everyone said that they felt better than they had at the beginning and were pleased with the process.

Question 10: What benefits where there for the school?

This was a resolution which allowed everyone to feel safer at the PRU, if we had excluded and involved the police (which was a consideration), we would not have been able to have the boys and the girl at the PRU. Even if we had excluded the boys it would have been likely that the girl would not have returned to the PRU because of a fear of reprisals. It has shown that there is a commitment to seeking a resolution with parents and young people that allows everyone to move on. It has allowed us to use this approach again when there is a serious incident.

Question 11: Would you do anything differently next time

The boys that did not attend were sent a letter and they and their parents seen separately, I would have liked to have been able to have been able to worked harder to get them there, Next time I would like to have more time (it was the end of term), and also to ensure that the agreements from the meeting were able to be followed through quicker.

Staff member (teaching assistant): Brent.

Interview concerning restorative practices:

Before the training:

At first I was wondering what the restorative meeting would be about and how it would be used here. How would it work – would it work with these kids? For me, I know that some kids are easier but there are some you can't reach at all. In the year 11s at the time there were a few that were harder to reach and they would not answer questions. At that time I would often deal with situations, and although I wanted to know what had happened, I was also pretty sure of what had happened and not necessarily ready to hear what the kid said.

Training:

Conference training five days

Restorative practice training three days

Since Training

I feel more aware about how to speak and listen to young people's points of views, I am more assertive, I feel more alert and more able to have conversations, and more courageous. When I think back about some things I am really glad for this training. I feel like I know myself better. Now I feel that people listen to me more.

I use it constantly in my daily practice, it has improved my relationships.

There was one female student that I could not reach, she had left site without permission, and I asked to speak to her. We had a lovely conversation, she explained that she had been stressed, and I was shocked about what was happening for her. That would not have happened before. I realise that is about the way you respect these young people and talk to them.

The kids used to call me moany, I have reflected this and looked at the RP and now I don't get called that any more. I can now sometimes leave things without becoming annoyed and I feel that the kids do not see me as an enemy any more.

Back on Track: Case – study, Camden

Question 1: What happened?

In a year 8 tutor group. Girl A that I was key-working was distraught about constant taunts from a group of girls in her tutor group. They had called her rude names and she had been in arguments with some of them. Girl A was constantly crying and felt threatened.

Question 2: How was the incident referred to you?

Girl A disclosed the information in a session I had with her.

Question 3: What preparation do you have to do?

I brought the eight girls involved together without Girl A to have a group discussion of how they felt. I found there was a lot of information and anger and resentment felt from things said and done in year 7. I called a second meeting and the girls wrote down all the things they felt had happened in year 7 in a 'year 7 book'. I read through the information and talked through the issues raised with Girl A and suggested a meeting of all the girls now that things were clearer on why things had gone wrong.

Question 4: What restorative approach did you use?

A restorative group meeting was called with all girls involved.

Question 5: What happened at the meeting?

I reminded the girls of the rules of a restorative meeting and what my role was. I reminded the girls that they had already spoken and written down their views and that this was the opportunity for both sides to hear the others point of view. Girl A did not want to talk so I gave each girl the opportunity to say how they felt and what they would like to happen now. Girl A was very distressed and crying but wanted to continue. Girl A then sat in another room to calm down and girls continued to discuss how they felt.

Girl A returned and, although she did not speak, listened to the girls. Girl A had said some insulting things to the girls in year 7 and I needed her to acknowledge this and for the other girls to forgive and move on as Girl A needed to forgive their behaviour now. No resolution was found at this meeting so I called meeting to a close and saw Girl A the next day. We discussed what had happened and Girl A said she never realised the effect she had had on them and wanted

make a power point presentation to say sorry. Girl A did this in one of our sessions and I called the group together again. I reminded the girls of the rules again and everyone spoke briefly about how they felt. Girl A was more confident and she spoke briefly saying she was sorry. I emphasised to the group the need to now move on and 'close' their year 7 book they had written. I had drawn up a contract of how they should behave towards one another and all the girls signed it. Girl A showed the girls her power point presentation that said sorry to each girl. The meeting was then closed.

Question 6: Did any key moment happen to bring the parties together or keep them apart?

When Girl A apologised and showed she acknowledged what she had done in the past, rather than present herself as just the victim of their behaviour. There was a lot less anger in the room.

Question 7: Did the meeting find a resolution? If so what was it?

They did find resolution in that they realised they needed to move on even if in their hearts they could not forgive.

Question 8: How have things been since the meeting?

Things have moved on significantly. Girl A is still isolated in that she has not developed friendships but she does not feel she has enemies either. There are still the occasional incidences where Girl A has been clumsy in the way she interacts with other girls but they tell me about it and we deal with it quickly on a 1-1 basis. There is not the underlying tension there was before and the girls are civil to Girl A, although not overly friendly.

Question 9: What benefits were there of using this approach for the people involved?

The first restorative meeting with the group brought up many feelings of personal anger and sadness in the girls to do with their own lives and they wanted to express their own sorrows as much as the reason we had called the group together. This I believed showed them that sometimes the way we react to others has a lot to do with how we are feeling and our own experiences. The girls shared with me and each other some of their most personal thoughts and experiences and developed trust and security in the school system of dealing with conflict.

Question 10: What benefits were there for the school?

The crying and constant arguments in this tutor group have been significantly reduced and the girls are confident that when there is a problem there is somewhere they can go where they will be listened to.

Question 11: Would you do anything differently next time

In hindsight I felt there was not enough emphasis on the girls' bullying behaviour this year and too much focus on the behaviour of Girl A last year. However, the girls' behaviour has improved significantly although I wasn't sure the message had got across at the time.

Question 12: Is there anything else you would like to add?

This was a large group for a resolution and at year 8 this was manageable but perhaps with older year groups you might have to break this down to avoid angers flaring up.

Back on Track: Case – study, Camden

Name of school: One One Five

Facilitator(s): Gaby Thomas and Evon Antwi

Question 1: What happened?

Student A wrote offensive things on student B's Facebook page. The comments related to sexual acts that student B had told student A she had done. The comments caused a flurry of other comments by lots of young people in the area, including some other students in the unit. Student B did not want to return to school because of this.

Question 2: How was the incident referred to you?

I was contacted by student B's mother.

Question 3: What preparation do you have to do?

I met with student B, her mother and older sister initially. I said that I wanted to try to manage the incident using a restorative approach and asked the older sister to be involved to support student B. We agreed that a RA conference would be a good way forward, so the following day I met with student B and did a restorative enquiry. I then met with student B's

sister and did an enquiry with her. Lastly I did an enquiry with student A.

That afternoon, I brought the group together, with a member of staff to support student A, whose father chose not to attend.

Question 4: What restorative approach did you use?

Enquiry followed by conference.

Question 5: What happened at the meeting?

The meeting was very powerful. Student A became very distressed and cried about what she had done. She really listened when student B's sister explained how the incident had impacted on her and how helpless she felt about keeping her sister safe. Student A was very remorseful and made a genuine apology and commitment not to do anything like that again.

Both students were eventually able to resume their friendship without further incidents taking place.

Question 6: Did any key moment happen to bring the parties together or keep them apart?

As above

Question 7: Did the meeting find a resolution? If so what was it?

Student A apologised and made a promise not to behave like that towards student B again.

Question 8: How have things been since the meeting?

There were no further incidents between the two girls.

Question 9: What benefits were there of using this approach for the people involved?

The approach enabled student A, who finds it difficult to reflect on her actions or to see the consequences of her actions, to hear how her behaviour impacted not only on student B but also on her family – I think that was very powerful and really made her consider her actions more thoroughly.

Question 10: What benefits were there for the school?

Student B felt comfortable to return to school and student A was less unpleasant to others – there were still further incidents however but not towards student B.

Question 11: Would you do anything differently next time

No

Back on Track: Case – study, Sutton.

Name of school: Limes College

Question 1: What happened?

An assault between a year 9 girl and boy. At lunch time. Instigated by the girl.

Question 2: How was the incident referred to you?

Through our on-call system

Question 3: What preparation do you have to do?

Referred to a member of staff trained to facilitate RA meetings.

Question 4: What restorative approach did you use?

Restorative meeting. With tutor and keyworker, plus two students involved.

Question 5: What happened at the meeting?

Resolution and understanding of both impact and harm. Students challenged untrained member of staff who started to blame. Student harmed accepted apology from the student who instigated the assault. Students both agreed to be around each other in future.

Question 6: Did any key moment happen to bring the parties together or keep them apart?

The staff member defending the harmed student by blaming the student who instigated the harm, brought both students together when challenging the staff member for blaming.

Question 7: Did the meeting find a resolution? If so what was it?

Yes, both agreed to be on-site together and to accept apology and reassurance that the behaviour would not be repeated. Both understood at the end why one had been excluded and accepted the need for time to cool down before they could be brought back together. Both acknowledged the need for respect and that violence was not an ok way to communicate.

Question 8: How have things been since the meeting?

The students have not had any issues with each other and the student who used violence has not used it with any other student either.

Question 9: What benefits were there of using this approach for the people involved?

Safe way to get both students discussing the incident, which allowed both to voice how they felt and understand each other's needs and feelings. Without feeling blamed.

Question 10: What benefits were there for the school?

Staff saw a positive way to reconcile two students who had been in the ultimate conflict which had led to violence. This has then led to a much easier way of managing those students as they can be left in provision together. Plus for staff they are using training and applying it and that is all part of the process of becoming more restorative.

Question 11: Would you do anything differently next time

All staff involved will be better trained and students will know more about the approach.

Back on Track: Case – study, Sutton

Name of school: Limes College

Question 1: What happened?

A member of staff was threatened by a student who had to be restrained to stop them from hitting the member of staff, which led to an exclusion.

Question 2: How was the incident referred to you?

Through our on-call system

Question 3: What preparation do you have to do?

Referred to a member of staff trained to facilitate RA meetings. (The member of staff who was untrained in the last meeting and is now trained)

Question 4: What restorative approach did you use?

Restorative meeting. With tutor, parent, student and member of staff threatened.

Question 5: What happened at the meeting?

Resolution and understanding of both impact and harm. Student heard how member of staff was feeling and was hurt by his actions, the member of staff cried and so did the student. The student and member of staff accepted that the student was really sorry for what he had done and that he was shocked at how his actions had impacted upon her. The parent also was upset and understood why the student needed to move to a longer term provision which was more appropriate for his long term needs.

Question 6: Did any key moment happen to bring the parties together or keep them apart?

The staff member crying as she told her story.

Question 7: Did the meeting find a resolution? If so what was it?

Yes, both ended well and acknowledged the genuine care that they had for each other.

The student and his parent also agreed at the meeting that he needed long term support and agreed to a move to long term provision.

Question 8: How have things been since the meeting?

The student is in the process of moving to long term provision.

Question 9: What benefits were there of using this approach for the people involved?

Safe way to get all parties discussing the incident, which allowed both to voice how they felt and understand each other's needs and feelings. Without feeling blamed. Which also led to an acceptance of long term needs. It also led to a good ending for both the member of staff and the student and parent, who felt that he was moving on and not excluded or rejected.

Question 10: What benefits were there for the school?

Staff saw a positive way to reconcile a serious staff and student issue which has led to all agreeing that the student should access long term SEBD provision. This has then led to a restorative ending.

Question 11: Would you do anything differently next time

No

Question 12: Is there anything else you would like to add?

We are at the start of the process and I would hope that as we use it more and more for the lesser incidents and use circles more at the beginning and end of every day and lesson when we move into our new build, that we will see more and more impact.

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