

## RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

Restorative Justice uses the incident of misbehaviour as an educational opportunity by fostering more socially responsible relationships and behaviours that considers others' perspective.

This is achieved through carefully structured opportunities for the individuals involved to:

- Understand the impact of their actions
- Recognise their responsibilities
- Make amends to those who have been affected

The most common form of restorative justice is community conferencing.

The key principles of this method are as follows:

- The aim is to develop empathy and concern for others.
- Scenarios that sustain bullying and harassment can be shifted by working with the perpetrators, and often their family and/or peer group.

Restorative justice approaches require these factors to be in place first:

- Support for the victimised pupil who needs to have identified that he/she is being bullied and is confident that the approach advocated will work.
- Preliminary investigation to clearly understand the issues before the process is implemented.
- Staff guidelines and professional development to build understanding, skills and confidence in using the strategies
- Support within the school community for the approach
- Agreement that the goal is to solve the problem rather than to interrogate, punish, blame or label individuals
- Respectful facilitation of the process by trained people
- Follow-up monitoring of the agreement.

