

All Schools

18th February 2010

Our Ref: CJW/ajbs

Dear Colleague

Restorative Approaches in Worcestershire – a Multi-Agency Strategy

Restorative Justice Approaches seek to redefine challenging, anti-social and criminal behaviour and aim to bring together all those affected by an incident or event and support them to find their own solutions in order to move forwards. The focus is on the relationships of those affected plus the wider community, the needs, and the repair of harm rather than rule or law breaking. The restorative process is structured around key restorative questions:

- What happened?
- What were you thinking?
- What were you feeling?
- Who has been affected?
- What do we need (to do) now?

These questions can be used as daily restorative dialogue as well as in preparation for face to face conversations and for formal restorative meetings for more serious issues.

Nationally, the restorative movement is gaining momentum, with networks forming, areas of practice joining up, and a growing body of supportive evidence. This is reflected in the most recent OFSTED framework, which places an increased emphasis on pupils understanding of the impact of their actions and behaviour, for example:

'How well pupils behave' is one of the key judgements that is evaluated under 'Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils'. The school's work to promote good behaviour is judged as part of the school's provision, under the 'effectiveness of care, guidance and support'. 'Inspectors should take account of pupils' treatment of each other, including their politeness to one another and towards adults; their behaviour around the school, including awareness of each other's needs at break times, between lessons and in assemblies and other activities; the way that they treat the school facilities; and their ability and willingness to manage their own behaviour'.

OFSTED: Inspecting Behaviour, Supplementary guidance for section 5 inspections, Sept 2009

In Worcestershire, a multi-agency Restorative Approaches Steering Group has been convened over recent months. The first task for this group is to establish how widespread the use of restorative approaches is in local services for children, young people and families. It is important to note that at this stage there are limited resources in place to support training and development of this work – your input on the use and impact of restorative

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approaches will be critical in establishing an evidence base to further develop restorative approaches in Worcestershire.

Please find enclosed a questionnaire regarding the use of restorative approaches within your setting / team. I would be grateful if you could ask the most appropriate member of your staff to complete and return the questionnaire by Friday 5th March 2010.

'Another Way' is a DVD that has been developed by young people with the Youth Offending Service. Please indicate on your questionnaire if you would like to receive a copy of this valuable resource, which will offer a starting point for furthering the use of restorative approaches throughout your setting.

If you have any queries about the questionnaire, or the Restorative Approaches Steering Group, please contact Hannah Cridford, Anti-Bullying Coordinator at Children's Services on 01905 728895 or hcridford@worcestershire.gov.uk.

On behalf of Gail Quinton who supports this work, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you in anticipation of your help with this important and progressive area of work.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Colin Weeden', written in a cursive style.

Colin Weeden
Head of Raising Achievement and Access to Learning