



National Evaluation of the Restorative Justice in Schools Programme

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1 About the national evaluation of the Restorative Justice in Schools programme

1.1 Background to the national evaluation of restorative justice in schools

In May 2000, the Youth Justice Board of England and Wales launched a pilot initiative to test the impact of restorative justice conferences in two Lambeth schools. Following early signs that restorative justice conferences showed promise in addressing bullying and other forms of anti-social behaviour, the Board was successful in attracting funding for three years from the Treasury's Invest to Save fund to extend the programme to other areas of London in April 2001. Borough partnerships were invited to tender for these initiatives through the local Youth Offending Teams (Yots). By the end of May 2001, three other boroughs joined the initiative, following the tender process: Hackney, Hammersmith and Fulham, and Islington.

However, by the summer of 2002, only one of the new boroughs (Hammersmith and Fulham) had made any progress towards implementing a programme of restorative justice work in schools, and the Board decided to take back the funds that had been allocated to Hackney and Islington.

The remaining funding was repackaged into a national programme, and Yots in England and Wales were invited to apply for funds to implement restorative projects within schools in their local area. Due to the lack of progress in implementing projects in Hackney and Islington, bids had to demonstrate that Yots already had relationships with the schools in their area.

Seven Yots were successful in this bidding process: Barnet, Blackpool, Medway, North Lincolnshire, Oxford, Rhondda Cynon Taff and Somerset. The projects spanned a range of different approaches to introducing restorative practices into schools, including restorative justice conferences. Chapter 3 of this report details these approaches. The newly recruited Yots had only 18 months to develop and implement their projects (because of considerably smaller budgets, ranging between £15,000 and £44,000, and the timespan of the Treasury grant) rather than the three years that the Hammersmith and Fulham, and Lambeth projects had had to implement their projects.

As such, the Restorative Justice in Schools programme consisted of nine local Yots working across 26 schools (20 secondary and 6 primary).

The contract to evaluate these initiatives was awarded to Partners in Evaluation, a specialist agency with a multi-ethnic team of researchers and a national reputation for conducting evaluations in the fields of health, education, social exclusion and regeneration.

The evaluation was intended to explore the following research questions:

1. What are the levels of victimisation, bullying and robbery in the schools in the study?
2. How are restorative justice approaches introduced into the schools?
3. To what extent are participants in restorative justice conferences (victims and offenders) satisfied with the process at the time of the conference?

4. To what extent do the conferences show short-term and long-term effects on the participants' experience of victimisation, robbery and bullying?
5. Do conferences and other restorative justice approaches have wider effects on the nature and frequency of acts of victimisation in the schools involved in the project?
6. Are restorative justice conferences a useful tool in reducing school exclusions?

This report shows the findings of the national evaluation. In writing the report, our aim has been to produce a report that is concise and usable, presenting the most important data so that the key findings and messages do not get lost.

Chapter 2 offers a brief literature review. Chapter 3 provides a detailed description of the interventions undertaken in the Restorative Justice in Schools programme. Chapter 4 shows the results of the restorative justice conferences, while Chapter 5 highlights the wider findings of the research within and across the schools. Chapter 6 provides a series of case studies of how restorative justice works in practice. Chapter 7 highlights other key issues for the development of restorative practices in schools; and Chapter 8 identifies the key findings and recommendations, and draws together best practice for implementing restorative justice practices in schools.

1.2 The interventions

A range of restorative interventions were implemented during the national programme, from training school staff to implement restorative practices (including active listening and restorative enquiry, circle time and mediation) and developing peer mediation, through to school staff and outside agencies (Yots, police and mediation service personnel) undertaking restorative justice conferences. These are more fully described in Chapter 3 of this report. The Youth Justice Board was not prescriptive as to what restorative approaches should be used.

The interventions developed were entirely new to schools in all but two areas. Lambeth had introduced restorative conferences in May 2000 in two schools as part of the earlier Board-led pilot project. However, since the same evaluation team had conducted the evaluation of the Lambeth pilot (see Edgar et al, 2002), pupil baseline data were available and were used as the baseline for this evaluation. In Oxfordshire, Thames Valley Police had introduced police-led restorative justice conferences between 1997 and 1998 in the secondary school and three of the six primary schools covered by Restorative Justice in Schools (as part of the Bretch Hill initiative, see Hudson and Pring, 2000). In these Oxfordshire schools, the Restorative Justice in Schools interventions followed the training of school staff in restorative practices so that restorative interventions would be fully integrated into the work of the schools. No baseline data were available to cover the period before the introduction of these initiatives; the only such data available were those collected during this evaluation.

Finally, six schools already had peer mediation projects before the Restorative Justice in Schools programme.

1.3 Evaluation methodology

1.3.1 Key data

The evaluation began in September 2001 in the Hammersmith and Fulham, and Lambeth schools; the other areas were included in the evaluation from October 2002. Data were collected continuously until March 2004.

Key data were collected for each school at the beginning and at the end of the evaluation. These included contextual data (such as the school roll and the percentage of pupils receiving free school meals) and performance indicator data (such as exclusions, attendance, staff sickness and turnover, and the number of restorative conferences).

1.3.2 Pupil surveys

All Year 7 and Year 9 pupils in the participating secondary schools completed baseline victimisation questionnaires (see Appendix 1) as early as possible before the interventions were introduced (4,604 pupils in the 20 “programme” schools). The survey was developed in 2001 and was used in the original Lambeth pilot study before the national Restorative Justice in Schools programme (Edgar et al, 2002).

The survey was repeated in each of the schools with the same year groups between January and March 2004 in order to find out whether the restorative justice initiatives had made a difference to the levels of victimisation, bullying, and feelings of safety experienced by pupils, as well as measuring their attitudes according to a number of key variables such as their perceptions of how well (or how badly) the school was doing at stopping bullying, and whether telling a teacher about being bullied was “grassing”. Studies have found that bullying peaks in Year 7, following transition from primary school to secondary school (Rigby, 1996; Pepler et al, 1997). The survey aimed to pick up any changes in the school environment as experienced by the pupils, rather than looking for changes in the group per se.

One of the two schools in North Lincolnshire did not undertake the follow-up survey in 2004 as they had dropped out of the programme due to a bad experience during their first conference. More details are given on this in section 3.4.6.

The same survey was conducted in one additional school in each of the nine areas (baseline and spring 2004, with 2,077 Years 7 and 9 pupils). These schools were selected with the co-operation of the local Yots as having roughly similar characteristics as the programme schools. It is important to stress that it was not possible to find schools that matched exactly the programme schools, as no two schools are exactly alike in terms of pupil rolls, exam results, the socio-economic status of its pupils, and school ethos. However, Yot staff were asked by the evaluation team to select schools that were as similar as possible. Section 3.4 shows the key characteristics of each of the programme and non-programme schools in each area.

These nine schools were termed “non-programme” schools. They were used as comparators to track whether any changes between the two surveys in the programme schools had taken place in the non-programme schools. This was used as a proxy measure to try to identify any effects that restorative justice may have had in the programme schools. If changes happened in only the programme schools, the changes could be attributed to the effects of restorative justice interventions over and above other interventions in the schools to improve behaviour. If changes were seen in the non-programme schools, they could be attributed to the normal range of interventions that all schools are using to improve behaviour. Programme and non-programme schools alike had a range of other initiatives designed to have an impact on behaviour – more than 40 initiatives were cited across the schools; it would be impossible to have “control” schools that were not trying to improve behaviour. There were no primary non-programme schools for comparison used in the study because only one primary school in the study actually used conferences.

Similar surveys were conducted at baseline and in spring 2004 in the primary schools with pupils in Years 5 and 6 (381 pupils). Only four of the six primary schools agreed to undertake the surveys. The two schools that did not participate were in Oxfordshire. Initially they both had agreed to participate, but then would not co-operate (the staff member attending the whole-school training from one of the schools did not complete the training, and the school effectively dropped out of the project through lack of communication).

The surveys were administered in one of three ways, based on negotiations between the evaluation team and the individual schools:

- by a member of the evaluation team in a whole year group assembly;
- by a member of the evaluation team in individual tutor groups;
- by school staff in tutor groups (guidance on how to administer the survey was provided in a protocol – surveys were then collected by a member of the evaluation team, Yot or mediation service, or sent by registered post).

The use of these different approaches was pragmatic to ensure the maximum co-operation of the schools, as participation was entirely voluntary. One of the disadvantages, however, was that the evaluation team had less control on how the surveys were carried out, although guidance was issued to minimise differences in the way the survey was administered in different settings. In two schools, there was considerable variation between the numbers of surveys received at baseline and at follow-up (usually because one or more tutor groups had not completed the survey); but these effects were cancelled out across the data set, due to the large number of questionnaires collected. Table 1.1 shows a 4% variation between the numbers of pupil questionnaires received for baseline and follow-up in the secondary school, and a 6% variation in primary schools.

All pupils in the target year groups who were in school on the days that the surveys were run completed a questionnaire. However, the number of absentees in the target groups on any particular day are not known; as a result, it is impossible to calculate a response rate. Notwithstanding, it is still likely that it was very high (over 90%).

Surveys from five of the secondary schools were dropped from the programme-wide analysis between baseline and follow-up surveys based on the following criteria.

- Programme schools had implemented fewer than six conferences (although one of the Blackpool schools that had recorded only four conferences was included because it was known that they had conducted many more conferences than had been recorded).
- The interventions were not new (this included the Oxfordshire secondary school that had had police-led conferencing for several years).
- baseline data were not available (one non-programme school lost its baseline surveys before collection)

Table 1.1: Numbers of completed pupil questionnaires included in analysis

Type of school	No. of schools	Baseline	Follow-up
Secondary (programme)	14	3,569	3,415
Secondary (non-programme)	9	2,244	2,164
Total secondary	23	5,813	5,579
Primary (programme)	5	380	407
Total all schools	28	6,193	5,986

1.3.3 Staff surveys

A new survey instrument was developed at the start of the national Restorative Justice in Schools programme to measure school staff experience and views (see Appendix 2). The survey measured a number of variables, including staff perception of changes in pupil behaviour, staff views about exclusions, and classroom disturbance measures (including the amount of teaching time lost due to poor behaviour). Baseline measures were taken from programme and non-programme schools, with follow-up measures in spring 2004.

These surveys were not administered in the Lambeth or Hammersmith and Fulham schools, as the survey was not developed until the advent of the national Restorative Justice in Schools research, and it was therefore too late to take baseline measures.

Questionnaires were distributed to staff by a senior manager in each school, and were returned to the evaluation team in individual Freepost envelopes. Response rates varied widely between the schools (from 23% to 47%). The total response rate was 39% for the baseline and 32% for the follow-up.

One school in North Lincolnshire dropped out of the programme and so completed baseline data only. One non-programme school participated in the baseline survey, but dropped out of the follow-up survey as too many staff were off sick following an Ofsted inspection and the head teacher did not wish to burden her staff any further. The data from both these schools were excluded from the programme-wide analysis. Surveys were administered in all the primary schools with the exception of the Oxfordshire school, which had dropped out of the programme.

Table 1.2: Numbers of completed school staff questionnaires included in analysis

Type of school	Baseline	Follow-up
Secondary (programme)	582	487
Secondary (non-programme)	331	261
Total secondary staff	913	748
Primary (programme)	237	201
Total all staff	1150	949

1.3.4 Post-conference interviews with conference participants, facilitators and supporters

Research staff visited all the programme schools regularly to interview conference participants as soon as possible after conferences had taken place (see Appendix 3). Confidentiality was explained to participants using a sliding scale to demonstrate what information the interviewer could treat as confidential and what information the interviewer would have to disclose to the school or to the police (see Appendix 4).

A total of 538 parties were interviewed initially, with 166 (31%) of these being reinterviewed three months later to see if the agreement had been upheld and the learning sustained. A further 26 facilitators and 25 supporters who had attended conferences were interviewed following conferences (this also included parents, who were interviewed by telephone).

Table 1.3: Number of conference participants interviewed in the evaluation by Yot area

Area	No. of post-conference pupil interviews	No. of follow-up interviews with pupils	Percentage followed up	No. of interviews with facilitators	No. of interviews with supporters
Barnet	47	25	53%	0	1
Blackpool	34	4	12%	2	4
Hammersmith and Fulham	144	43	30%	4	3
Lambeth	93	33	35%	3	3
Medway	100	20	20%	6	6
North Lincolnshire	19	10	53%	3	4
Oxfordshire	25	11	44%	4	4
Rhondda Cynon Taff	33	15	45%	3	0
Somerset	43	5	12%	1	0
Total	538	166	31%	26	25

1.3.5 Measures to evaluate peer mediation

Tools were given to projects (in Blackpool) that were implementing peer mediation as part of Restorative Justice in Schools, including self-esteem scales for mediators, and the national peer mediation follow-up interview schedules as developed by the first county-wide peer mediation initiative in England (see Bitel, 2001), and adapted by the Young Mediators' Network in 2002. However, these were not made use of by the projects, despite the researchers' numerous requests for them to do so. No specific reasons were given as to why the tools were not used. Nor were any monitoring procedures put in place by the projects to count the number of mediations conducted by pupils. As a consequence, this evaluation has no data on the frequency or effectiveness of the peer mediation introduced in this project.

1.3.6 Key stakeholder interviews

Key stakeholder interviews were conducted with school and project staff towards the end of the Restorative Justice in Schools pilot in spring 2004. A total of 85 staff (see Table 1.4) were interviewed using open-ended, semi-structured qualitative interview schedules (these have not been included in the appendices of this report, as there were seven different versions, depending on the staff role, in order to make them more relevant).

Key stakeholder interviews were conducted in 24 of the 26 schools.

These data were analysed thematically. Towards the end of the round of interviews, the interviews were also used as a forum to discuss emerging themes and to test the validity of the emerging findings.

Table 1.4: Key stakeholders interviewed in spring 2004

Key stakeholders	Number interviewed
Yot staff	14
Head teachers (12 secondary; 3 primary)	15
Assistant/Deputy head teachers (12 secondary; 3 primary)	15
Head of year/house (secondary)	15
Learning mentors/Counsellors (secondary)	7
Learning support assistants (primary)	4
Other senior support staff (7 secondary; 2 primary)	9
Police officers	2
Mediation service staff	3
Restorative justice trainer	1
Total	85

2 Key literature review

2.1 Restorative justice

Restorative justice can offer many benefits to people affected by crime – to victims, offenders and to the wider community. But it must be done to high standards so that victims get a good service and it must be developed and implemented carefully based on established evidence and good practice. It is not a quick fix, nor a simple procedural intervention in which people can be trained and left to get on with it. It requires cultural change and a shift of focus to include the needs of the victim as well as the offender.

(Paul Goggins MP, Minister for the Home Office, correctional services and reducing reoffending, 2004)

Much has been written about restorative justice since its early development into practice in 1974 in Canada, when a probation officer, Mark Yantzi, asked two young offenders who had been on a vandalism spree in Ontario to meet their victims, apologise and make reparations (Yantzi and Worth, 1977; also see Christie, 1977; Coates and Gehm, 1985; Umbreit, 1986; Peachey, 1989; Wright and Galaway, 1989; Galaway and Hudson, 1990; Marshall and Merry, 1990; Zehr, 1990; Van Ness and Heetderks, 1997; Wright, 1999; Johnstone, 2004; and Hopkins, 2004).

Restorative justice can be defined by its fundamental principle – namely that, when one person has harmed another, the most useful response is to try to repair the harm done, rather than to retaliate against the perpetrator. Martin Wright (1999: 173) stated this central precept thus:

The distinguishing feature of restorative justice is that it is based on the idea that the response to crime should be to put right the harm, as far as possible, and not, as hitherto, to inflict further harm on the offender.

Tony Marshall's (1999) overview on restorative justice defined it as:

a problem-solving approach to crime which involves the parties themselves, and the community generally, in an active relationship with statutory agencies. (p.5)

Marshall (1999) further describes restorative justice as a set of principles including:

- making room for the personal involvement of those mainly concerned (particularly the offender and the victim, but also their families and communities)
- seeing crime problems in their social context
- a forward-looking (or preventive) problem-solving orientation
- flexibility of practice (creativity).

Marshall goes on to explain (p.6) that the primary purposes of restorative justice are to:

- attend fully to victim' needs – material, financial, emotional and social (including those personally close to the victim who may be similarly affected)
- prevent reoffending by reintegrating offenders into the community
- enable offenders to assume active responsibility for their actions
- recreate a working community that supports the rehabilitation of offenders and victims, and is active in preventing crime
- provide a means of avoiding escalation of legal justice and the associated costs and delays

Daniel Van Ness (1997) offered a more expansive interpretation of the term that encompassed abstract principles, good practice and desired outcomes (p.2):

Restorative justice is different from conventional justice processes in that it views crime primarily as injury (rather than primarily as lawbreaking), and the purpose of justice as healing (rather than punishment alone). It emphasises accountability of offenders to make amends for their actions, and focuses on providing assistance and services to the victims. Its objective is the successful reintegration of both victim and offender as productive members of safe communities.

Restorative justice practice has been extensively evaluated in a wide variety of countries, and evaluations are broadly positive (Masters, 2004). There is some evidence that, when practiced to a high standard, restorative justice interventions lead to a reduction in reoffending rates (Miers et al, 2001). But there is also much emerging and consistent evidence to show that restorative justice interventions benefit victims, helping to bring closure to the incident and reducing fears of further victimisation (Umbreit and Roberts, 1996).

The latest evidence available from the Re-integrative Shaming Experiments (RISE) studies in Australia show that victims of middle-range property and violent crime report a reduction in fear and anger, and increased sympathy towards the offender, with 75% of victims reporting that they were pleased with what the offender said to them in a restorative justice conference, and 90% reporting that they thought that the conference went well, that they would participate in a conference again should the need arise, and that they would recommend it to other victims (Strang, 2004; Strang et al, 1999).

2.2 Restorative justice and schools

The use of the term 'restorative justice' in the school context is controversial, and practitioners in different parts of the world use different terms (Masters, 2004). There are questions as to the appropriateness of the word 'justice' in the school context.

But the philosophy of restorative justice redefines crime primarily as harm or injury rather than law-breaking. Transplanting that philosophy from criminal justice to schools is deceptively difficult. Deceptive, because there appear to be strong parallels between schools and criminal justice. Difficult, because key concepts in both institutions reflect established practices, which restorative justice philosophy will transform (Edgar et al, 2002).

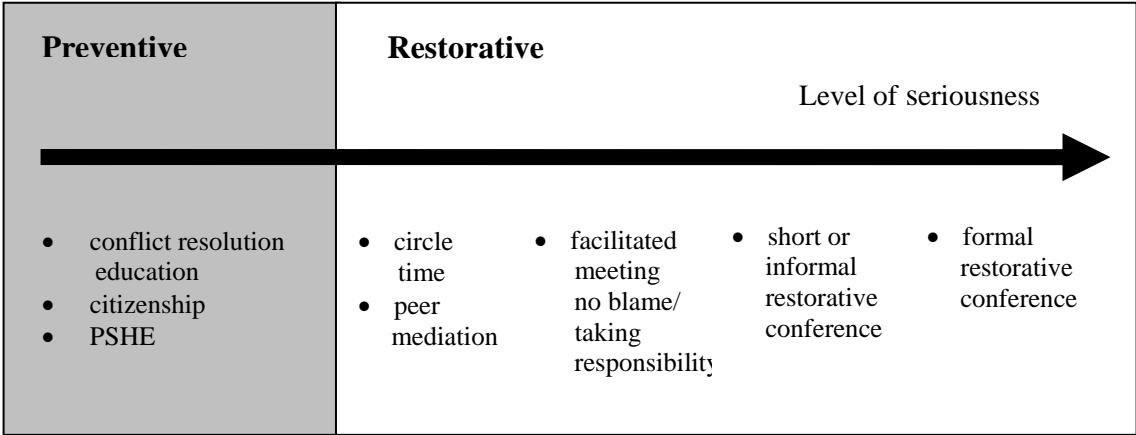
Of course there are parallels between schools and criminal justice. If a young person is robbed, her loss may seem the same to her whether the incident occurred in the school or in her neighbourhood (Edgar et al, 2002). A criminal might be punished with a period of community service, while a disruptive student might be excluded from school. Both the criminal law and the school rules might be seen as disciplinary codes.

Nonetheless, in applying the philosophy to a school environment there is a serious danger that the meaning of key concepts will be distorted, unless the differences between courtrooms and schoolrooms are made explicit. For example, in schools, acts of misbehaviour (not crimes) are detected by teachers, not police officers. Students (not the accused) can be sent to the head teacher (not the judge). A student whose property has been taken is not defined by the school as a victim in the same way as the criminal justice system deals with victims of crime (Edgar et al, 2002).

In the UK, restorative justice approaches in schools encompass a range of initiatives that operate along the continuum of the gravity of rule-breaking or harm done (or in some cases an actual offence). These include circle time, peer mediation, the ‘no blame’ approach (which is usually facilitated by a member of the school staff and is also referred to in some schools as the ‘taking responsibility’ approach) and now restorative conferencing. They may also include preventive aspects such as conflict resolution education and part of the citizenship curriculum, which focus on listening and other communication skills, anger management and the notion of responsibility. These all prepare the ground on which restorative justice may become more easily embedded and flourish.

Figure 2.1 shows how these different types of intervention are placed along the continuum (adapted from Edgar et al, 2002).

Figure 2.1: Restorative justice interventions in schools



Other authors (for example, Hopkins, 2004) include other approaches and interventions such as active listening and restorative enquiry, a way of listening that enables the listener to draw out the speaker’s story, while acknowledging their thoughts, feelings and needs.

One feature that most research and published articles in the UK and the USA stress is that restorative justice requires a whole-school approach (for example, see Cohen, 1995; Bitel and Rolls, 2000; Bitel, 2001; Hopkins and Tyrrell, 2001; Hopkins, 2004). All these authors point to the fact that restorative approaches work best when a positive ethos has been established, and when one-to-one problem-solving skills (such as listening and responsibility) have been introduced into the mainstream curriculum, through special workshops, or the Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) or citizenship curriculum. The evidence indicates that, when schools achieve an integrated restorative structure, peer mediation, circle time, and facilitated meetings and conferences are most effective.

Furthermore, the research in Leicestershire (Bitel 2001) has shown that the success of peer mediation is largely due to the commitment of the head teacher. If the head places mediation sufficiently high in the priority of the school's activities, most of the barriers to success fall away. This may well apply to other restorative justice approaches.

In 2003, the Restorative Justice Consortium developed a series of principles relating to restorative justice in schools. These are:

- primary aim to be the repair of harm
- restorative requirements to be fair, appropriate and workable
- where a restorative requirement is appropriate, but victims decline to participate, there should be opportunities for reparation to the school, or reparation to others who have suffered harm or loss
- voluntary offers to repair harm or loss, by those that have caused it, to be valued
- contents of restorative meetings to be considered confidential.

2.3 Restorative justice conferences

According to Braithwaite (1989), restorative justice conferences “may prevent crime by facilitating a drift back to law-supportive identities from law-neutralising ones”.

Restorative justice conferences entail a process whereby the parties to a conflict, dispute or crime are invited to a facilitated face-to-face meeting to discuss the facts that led up to the incident, for the harmed/aggrieved person or persons to explain what has happened to them as a result of the incident, and for the perpetrator(s) to take responsibility for their actions (usually in the form of an apology, and an agreement about their future conduct or behaviour). Restorative justice conferences can follow a pre-determined script or structure.

What distinguishes conferencing from mediation is that other parties are invited to the meeting, such as family members, significant others or supportive friends. The role of these external supporters is to assist the aggrieved in telling their story and to ensure that the full consequences of the incident are made clear to the perpetrator. The supporters of the perpetrators help them to accept responsibility for their actions, to ensure that their actions are known (which may bring about what Braithwaite, 1989, termed reintegrative shaming) and to support them in desisting from causing further harm.

In the pilot study in Lambeth (see Edgar et al, 2002), there was no clear guidance about the kind of situation in which a conference would be a more suitable response than mediation. An ad hoc practical solution was proposed to provide a working distinction between mediation and conferences. It was considered that mediation might work best with long-running conflicts, and with minor incidents that would not normally attract an official response. Conferences should be used for more serious cases, including bullying and theft from a person, which would normally be subject to an official response (e.g. exclusion). The strategy group hoped that these distinctions would convey to facilitators how they might decide whether the right response to a specific problem would be mediation or a conference. The group also recognised the common ground between mediation and conferences, in that both could have considerable benefits as a response to serious crime, and both constitute structured ways of dealing with conflicts, and empowering the parties to a conflict to work out solutions together. In respecting the validity of the middle ground between the two approaches, the strategy group proposed that, in response to a wide variety of circumstances, it might be best to inform the harmed person of the two models and let them choose the one they preferred.

2.4 The evidence to date about restorative justice in schools

Although the use of peer mediation to deal with victimisation and bullying in schools is now fairly widespread, the use of conferences for these purposes is still quite new.

To date, there has been little empirical research to demonstrate that restorative justice conferences in schools is effective. Australia has led the way in research in this area. While Cameron and Thorsborne (2001) report that conferencing has been found to be effective in schools, particularly in addressing bullying, Morrison (2001a) reports that the use of restorative justice conferencing in schools has received mixed reviews and the take-up has been slow. Ritchie and O'Connell (2001) suggest that what is needed is broader institutional support, in the form of a culture shift that supports the process.

In the UK, the Nottingham Restorative Conferencing Project (Tinker, 2002) evaluated a series of 105 conferences in 8 schools on the criteria that the issues had been resolved, no further issues took place between pupils involved in the conference, and attendance improved where it was an issue. Tinker reported that 78% of the conferences were fully successful based on these criteria, while 16% were partially successful.

The evaluation of the Lambeth schools pilot (Edgar et al, 2002) found that implementation was slow, caused by a lack of co-ordination and clarity, but that the early signs were that conferencing showed promising signs of dealing with serious conflicts in schools through resolving disputes, achieving closure and repairing the harm. One surprising finding was the lack of a clearly identifiable victim. The cases that came to conferences often involved multiple victimisation of both parties – each having been the perpetrator of harm at some stage during an escalating conflict.

3 The national Restorative Justice in Schools programme

3.1 About the national Restorative Justice in Schools programme

This chapter of the report provides more detail about the nine local initiatives that comprised the national Restorative Justice in Schools programme. It also contains data from the baseline pupil and school staff surveys that show the context and the nature of the types of problems that the restorative justice initiatives aimed to address: declining standards of pupil behaviour and high levels of victimisation of children and young people in schools by other pupils.

Restorative Justice in Schools was focused on bullying because there is evidence of strong links between bullying behaviour, low-level anti-social behaviour and more serious street crime. For example, one study showed that 60% of boys labelled as bullies between the ages of 10 and 13 had at least one criminal conviction by age 24; while between 35% and 40% had three or more convictions by age 24, compared with 10% of a control group who were neither bullies nor victims as children (Olweus, 1995).

An important challenge for Restorative Justice in Schools was to adapt tools developed in the criminal justice field for use in the school setting. Whereas much of the literature locates restorative justice as a response to crime, Restorative Justice in Schools was intended to respond to many incidents that were not crimes.

3.2 Declining standards of pupil behaviour

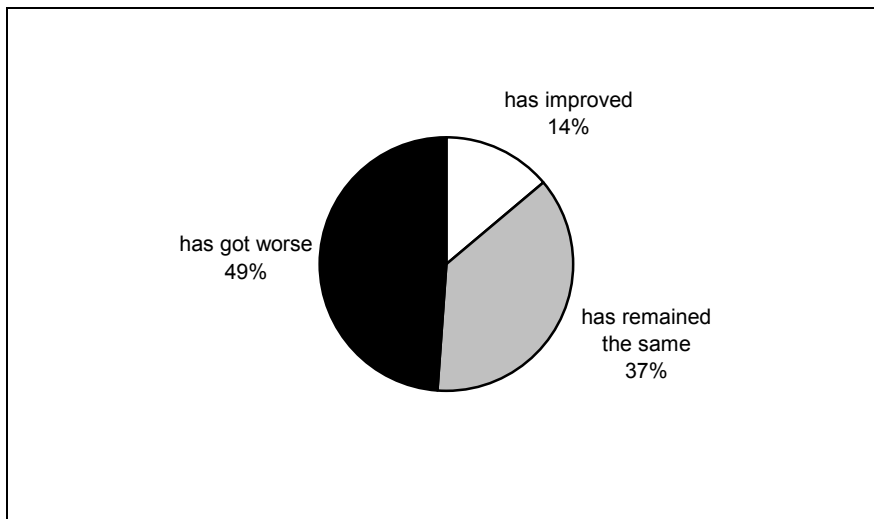
In evaluating the effectiveness of restorative justice interventions in schools, an assumption is made that the standards of pupil behaviour are static (remain constant) and that the restorative justice interventions will have a positive effect on improving pupil behaviour. However, anecdotal data suggests that pupil behaviour may be generally declining.

It is my experience from attending head teachers' conferences that heads are reporting that, although there is not a rise in top-level misbehaviour, there has been a big rise in lower level disruption. Pupils are less likely to take an order from a teacher without backchat, concentration levels are slipping, and verbal abuse such as swearing are all on the increase. Pupil behaviour is different than how it was in the past, and teachers need new strategies to cope with this. Their authority is less respected.

(Head teacher, secondary school)

The findings from our school staff baseline surveys bears this out. Figure 3.1 shows that just under half (49%) of all school staff reported that behaviour had got worse in the past year, while only 14% reported that it had got better. Therefore, restorative justice interventions are not being introduced into a static environment but, rather, one in which student behaviour is reported to be deteriorating.

Figure 3.1: Staff perceptions of changes in pupil behaviour at baseline 2002/3 (n=1,150)



The following data collected during the baseline staff surveys give more detail about the specifics of pupil behaviour and the extent of disruptive behaviour in schools that restorative justice might seek to address.

Figure 3.2 shows findings from the baseline surveys for the question: “In general, how would you rate the behaviour of most of the pupils most of the time?” These data show that approximately a third (30%) of school staff think that pupils are generally well behaved or quite well behaved, while a fifth (20%) think that pupils are generally not well behaved or are badly behaved.

Figure 3.2: School staff ratings of pupil behaviour generally at baseline 2002/3 (n=1,150)

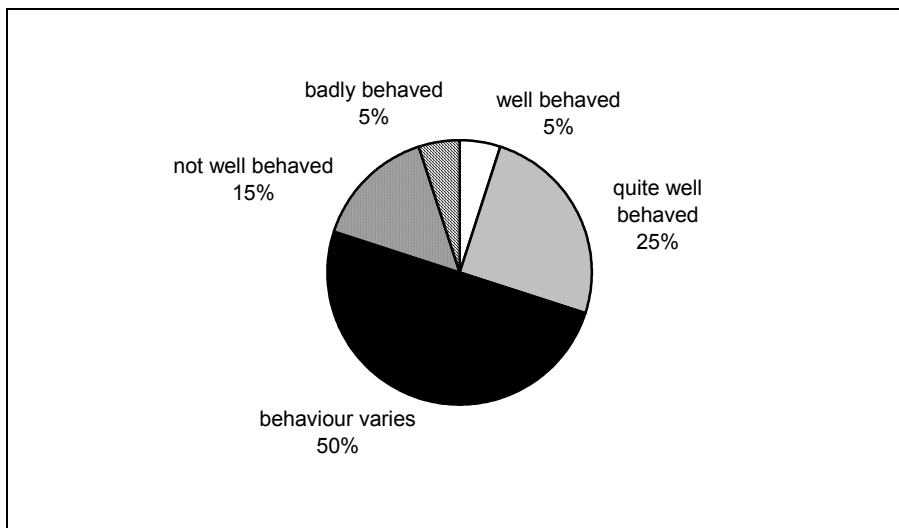
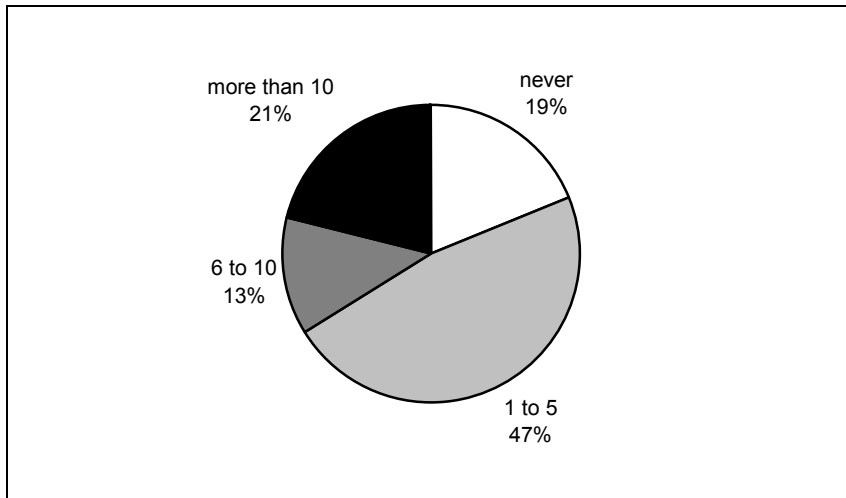


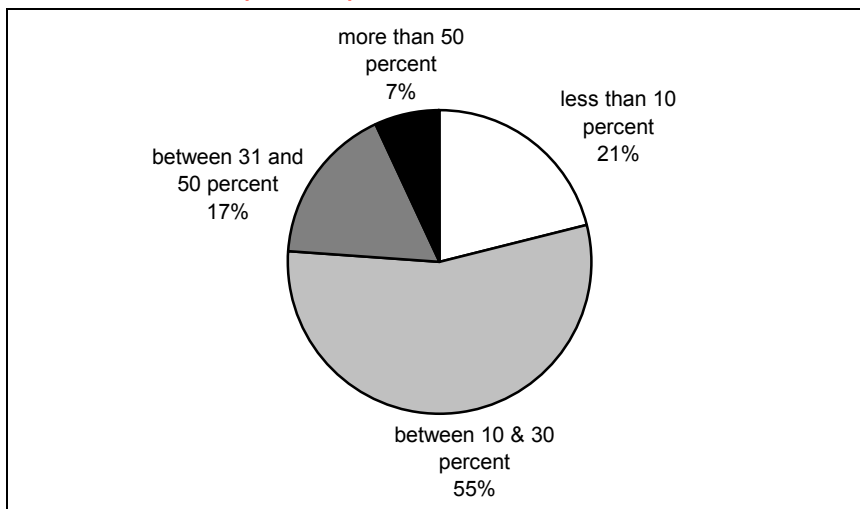
Figure 3.3 shows the number of times that school staff estimate pupils swore at them in the past month. It shows that more than four-fifths (81%) of school staff report being sworn at by a pupil in the past month. A fifth of staff report that they have been sworn at more than 10 times in that period.

Figure 3.3: School staff experience of the number of times they have been sworn at by pupils in the past month at baseline 2002/3 (n=1,150)



Similarly, four-fifths of teachers (79%) report that they have lost more than 10% of their teaching time dealing with behaviour problems during lessons, as shown in Figure 3.4, with one-quarter reporting that they lose a third or more of their teaching time due to behaviour problems in class.

Figure 3.4: Teachers' estimates of teaching time lost dealing with behaviour problems in class at baseline 2002/3 (n=1,150)



An aim of restorative justice initiatives is to halt this decline and help improve pupil behaviour.

3.3 Victimization in schools

The baseline pupil surveys showed that, overall, a fifth (21%) of pupils attending secondary schools in the programme and non-programme schools reported that they had been bullied by another pupil in the past month. This is in line with other recent research findings (Rigby, 1996; Morrison, 2001b; Oliver and Candappa, 2003; MORI, 2004). The MORI Youth Survey (2004) found that young people's experience of bullying had increased during the period of Restorative Justice in Schools (from 21% to 23%).

There was much variation across schools, and this is consistent with findings from other recent research (Oliver and Candappa, 2003). Levels of bullying were found to be higher in primary schools, with 35% of primary pupils reporting that they had been bullied in the past month in the baseline survey. Again, this is consistent with other research findings (Oliver and Candappa, 2003). It is, however, worth noting that, although the levels of bullying in primary schools in the survey is higher, the baseline survey showed that the percentage of pupils who thought that bullying was a problem in their schools was lower in primary than in secondary schools (46% versus 63%), suggesting that the type of bullying behaviour is less serious (as shown in Table 3.1).

Other important findings from the baseline pupil surveys in secondary and primary schools are also shown in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Key findings of the baseline pupil surveys in secondary and primary schools

	Secondary %	Primary %
Did not feel safe at school	7	4
Had skipped lessons because of bullying	6	14
Had never been hit or kicked	58	28
Had been hit or kicked a lot	8	18
Had never had things taken from them without their knowing	89	82
Had things taken from them a lot without their knowing	2	5
Had never been verbally threatened	72	47
Had been verbally threatened a lot	5	14
Had never been called racist names	81	65
Had been called racist names a lot	5	12
Had never been isolated	64	39
Had been isolated a lot	7	19
Had told a teacher that they were being bullied	15	42
Thought that their school was doing “a good job” at stopping bullying	43	70
Thought that bullying was a serious problem at their school	63	46
Thought that telling a teacher about bullying was “grassing”	35	25

3.4 The range of initiatives implemented in schools

Although the original London pilots (Hammersmith and Fulham, and Lambeth) set out to test the effectiveness of restorative justice conferences in schools, the national Restorative Justice in Schools programme allowed for a wider remit of restorative interventions. Table 3.2 shows the range of interventions and approaches implemented.

Table 3.2: Interventions and approaches in the national Restorative Justice in Schools programme

Area	Number and type of schools		Interventions			Staff trained to deliver interventions	Comments
	1°	2°	Conferences	Peer mediation	Whole-school approach		
Barnet		4	4	4 in 1 school		Yot, police, Connexions, school staff, volunteers	includes 1 PRU
Blackpool		2	4	4		Yot, learning mentors	home visits by Yot staff; a victims' group
Hammersmith and Fulham		2	4			Yot, staff in the pupil support unit in 1 school	
Lambeth		2	4			learning mentors, school counsellor	both schools already had peer mediation; SSP
Medway	1	3	4			local mediation service	three schools already had peer mediation
North Lincs		2	4			Yot	
Oxford	5	1	4 2° school only		4	school staff (deputy heads, learning mentors, learning support assistants)	involved a partnership of primary feeders to the 2°; police officers in 2° where SSP approach developed. One school already had peer mediation.
Rhondda Cynon Taff		3	4			Yot	school staff had been trained, but not facilitated any conferences
Somerset		1	4			Yot, police, and local mediation service	

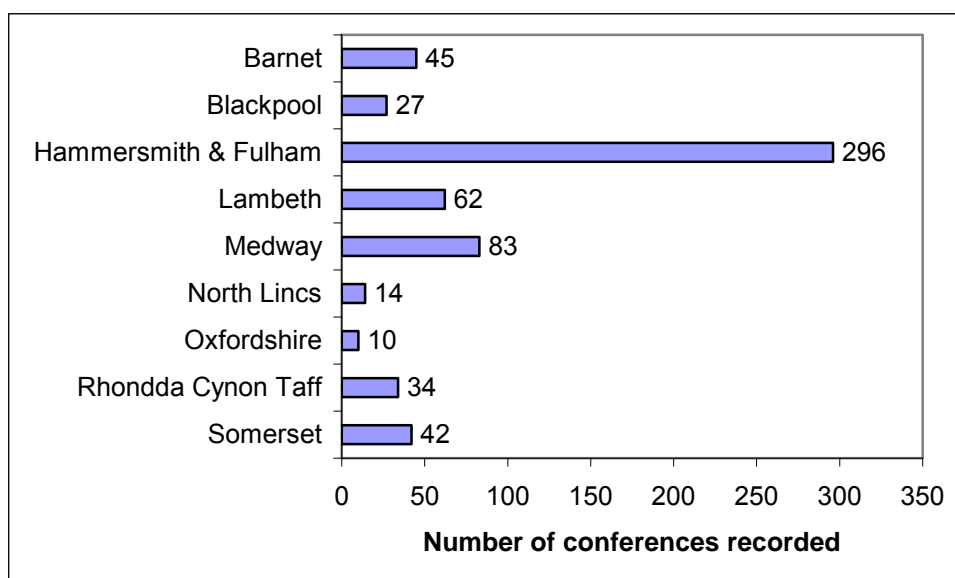
Note: 1°= Primary school; 2° = Secondary school; PRU = Pupil Referral Unit; SSP = Safer School Partnership

Restorative conferences

Although the Lambeth project began in 2000, it was not until 2001 that it started to run conferences. Hammersmith and Fulham was the next to begin running conferences, also in 2001. It is important to note that the Hammersmith and Fulham project was running conferences within three months of the funding being awarded, proving that the project can be implemented in a relatively short space of time. The other seven projects started in October 2002, but it was not until early 2003 that conferences began to take place, with the exception of the secondary school in the Oxfordshire project. This school had been running conferences since 1999 as part of the Bretch Hill initiative, whereby the school was allocated a police officer as his beat, and was the forerunner in the development of the Safer School Partnership model. The police officer facilitated restorative justice conferences as part of his remit. However, Restorative Justice in Schools proved to be a catalyst to stimulate interest in other school staff delivering restorative conferences.

A total of 625 conferences were officially run during the Restorative Justice in Schools pilot. Figure 3.5 shows the distribution of conferences by project area between January 2001 and March 2004.

Figure 3.5: Distribution of conferences by project area January 2001–March 2004



These 625 conferences involved 1,434 pupils who were parties to the conferences (perpetrators and victims) and 220 supporters. These findings suggest that supporters were involved in only between a third and a quarter of conferences, suggesting that many of the conferences may have been more akin to mediations than full conferences.

The following sections provide more detailed information on each of the nine areas.

Barnet

Barnet is a London borough on the northwest outskirts of the city. It is ethnically diverse, with pockets of deprivation sitting alongside leafy suburbs. Table 3.3 shows some of the key data collected about the schools at the beginning of the study (note, NP is the non-programme school).

Table 3.3: Key baseline data from Barnet schools

School code variable	A	B	C	D (PRU)	NP
School roll	749	1,220	1,113	50	788
% pupils receiving free school meals	43	20	38	80	40
% pupils attaining 5 A–C grades	29	59	27	0	25
Fixed-term exclusions	174	51	38	8	239
Permanent exclusions	9	0	3	0	0
% unauthorised absence	8.5	1.4	1.4	60	1.4
Number of days lost due to staff sickness	285	184	n/a	40	117

The Barnet Yot organised training for 25 conference facilitators including eight police officers, two Connexions personal advisers and four volunteers.

Barnet ran 45 conferences in the four schools, including one with a Pupil Referral Unit (PRU); although the bulk of the conferences were run in two schools. Most of the conferences were facilitated by volunteers, but Yot staff, Connexions personal advisers and one police officer also facilitated some of the conferences. Staff at only one school facilitated any conferences. Parents were involved in conferences in only one of the schools, generally when the incident was more serious.

Referrals were increased through targeted awareness-raising weeks, but dropped again at other times, demonstrating the need for a constant presence in the schools.

A peer mediation scheme was introduced in one school.

Blackpool

Blackpool is an area with a high population turnover due to seasonal workers and pockets of deprivation. Table 3.4 shows some of the key data collected about the schools at the beginning of the study.

Table 3.4: Key baseline data from Blackpool schools

School code variable	A	B	NP
School roll	801	1,254	1,087
% pupils receiving free school meals	34	11	26
% pupils attaining 5 A–C grades	24	60	36
Fixed-term exclusions	165	90	564
Permanent exclusions	5	2	2
% unauthorised absence	n/a	6.5	1.4
Number of days lost due to staff sickness	731	642	1,196

Blackpool ran 27 conferences in the 2 schools. All the official conferences were facilitated by Yot staff, who were always used for incidents between pupils and teachers. Home visits were made to parents in most of the cases.

However, following training by the Yot staff in one of the schools, many more conferences were run by the learning mentors for less serious incidents (between pupils); but these were not recorded, as the staff did not think that they counted as conferences, since the Yot had not been informed. The other school did not want school staff to be trained, and saw the intervention as purely led by outsiders, and Yot staff aimed to visit the school every day. This was not seen by the Yot as being sustainable.

Peer mediation schemes were introduced in both schools.

The Yot also ran three series of group sessions for victims of persistent bullying during the school holidays (the Accept programme).

Hammersmith and Fulham

Hammersmith and Fulham is an ethnically diverse inner-London borough with the usual challenges of an inner city. Table 3.5 shows some of the key data collected about the schools at the beginning of the study.

Table 3.5: Key baseline data from Hammersmith and Fulham schools

	A	B	NP
School roll	886	1,029	n/a
% pupils receiving free school meals	34	55	n/a
% pupils attaining 5 A–C grades	30	23	n/a
Fixed-term exclusions	104	252	n/a
Permanent exclusions	8	12	n/a
% unauthorised absence	3.9	4.2	n/a
Number of days lost due to staff sickness	n/a	n/a	n/a

Hammersmith and Fulham was the most active of all the areas. During Restorative Justice in Schools, 296 conferences were run – the highest number of conferences in the study. This was, in part, because the Yot employed two part-time co-ordinators from the outset of the initiative, and they received considerable media coverage in the local and national press. This helped to sustain the initial enthusiasm and increase the status of the project. Conferences were run by Yot staff and, in one of the two schools, by staff in the pupil inclusion unit. Changes in school leadership in one of the schools, and placement of the other school under special measures meant that the number of conferences was drastically reduced and exclusions increased.

High-quality information was produced for teachers and pupils to inform them about restorative justice at the start of the intervention. Twilight training was provided to school staff by Nottingham Local Education Authority at the start of the initiative in one school, and by Yot staff at a later date in the other (although staff in this school did not facilitate any conferences).

Lambeth

Lambeth is an inner-city London borough with the highest reported rate of violent crime in London. It is the most populous borough in London, and over a third (34%) of the population are from black and ethnic minority communities. It is the second most disadvantaged borough in England. Over 200 children are on the Child Protection Register, and 630 are classed as ‘looked after’. Within the schools, 164 languages are spoken, with 27% of pupils not fluent in English. Table 3.6 shows some of the key data collected about the schools at the beginning of the study.

Table 3.6: Key baseline data from Lambeth schools

School code variable	A	B	NP
School roll	510	820	1,150
% pupils receiving free school meals	80	58	63
% pupils attaining 5 A–C grades	13	16	41
Fixed-term exclusions	183	22	34
Permanent exclusions	8	3	5
% unauthorised absence	3.8	n/a	2.4
Number of days lost due to staff sickness	75	n/a	n/a

Lambeth schools were the first to implement restorative conferences in London. During Restorative Justice in Schools, the two Lambeth schools ran 62 conferences. The conferences were mostly facilitated by school staff. Two police officers were available to facilitate conferences through the Safer School Partnership (SSP), and the Restorative Justice in Schools Yot co-ordinator facilitated the occasional conference “when an additional injection of energy was needed into the project”. One volunteer who worked for Lambeth Mediation Service was available to facilitate conferences. As part of the Restorative Justice in Schools funding package, each school received half of the funding towards the cost of a learning mentor, who facilitated most of the conferences.

Medway

Medway is located at the east of the Thames gateway, and is characterised as having both affluent areas as well as large pockets of deprivation. Table 3.7 shows some of the key data collected about the schools at the beginning of the study.

Table 3.7: Key baseline data from Medway schools

School code variable	A	B	C	D Primary	NP
School roll	632	640	1200	366	1530
% pupils receiving free school meals	23	15	34	80	7
% pupils attaining 5 A–C grades	16	17	16		26
% pupils reading at/above their age				61	
Fixed-term exclusions	141	130	50	4	245
Permanent exclusions	4	7	8	1	24
% unauthorised absence	1.2	0.6	0.5	0.3	0.6
Number of days lost due to staff sickness	611	489	n/a	297	600

Restorative conferences were implemented in four schools including one primary, with joint funding from the Youth Justice Board’s Restorative Justice in Schools and the Medway Children’s Fund. A total of 85 conferences were run, although most conferences happened in three of the schools.

Medway Yot had a service-level agreement with Medway Mediation to deliver the project. Medway Mediation organised training for 72 staff and volunteers, with at least two volunteers attached to each school. This allowed for a quick response. Except when an outside neutral person ran a conference, conferences were run by trained school staff. In one school, conferences were run by two social inclusion officers. Staff from Medway Mediation joined the school governing boards of three of the four schools.

In one school, restorative conferencing was mentioned in the school prospectus. In another, which was near the foot of the school league tables, restorative justice approaches were reported to be “one of the things that is helping to change perceptions about the school”.

Before Restorative Justice in Schools, Medway Mediation had existing relationships with the schools and had implemented peer mediation in all of the schools.

North Lincolnshire

North Lincolnshire Yot, based in Scunthorpe, introduced restorative justice conferencing into two schools. Training was delivered to Yot staff, a few key staff at the schools and Connexions staff.

However, in one school, the person who had been working with the Yot left before the introduction of the intervention, and a new member of staff picked up the co-ordination. Pressure from the Yot to begin conferencing meant that the school referred a case for conferencing, but that it was handled poorly, and consequently went very badly. There was little communication between the Yot and the staff member before the event to clarify the process, and the parents attending were very unhappy. As such, the school withdrew from the programme, and relationships between the school and the Yot worker further deteriorated.

In the other school, after a slow start, 14 conferences were held, mostly facilitated by Yot staff. Table 3.8 shows key data collected on the schools at the study’s start.

Table 3.8: Key baseline data from North Lincs schools

School code variable	A	NP
School roll	970	957
% pupils receiving free school meals	18	22
% pupils attaining 5 A–C grades	37	32
Fixed-term exclusions	42	358
Permanent exclusions	8	1
% unauthorised absence	1	1.9
Number of days lost due to staff sickness	544	n/a

Oxfordshire

Oxfordshire Yot worked with a secondary school and its five primary feeders in Banbury, north Oxfordshire, an area of relatively high crime and anti-social behaviour. A six-week training programme was delivered to deepen restorative practices that had previously been introduced to the secondary school and two of the primaries through the Bretch Hill Initiative in 1997. Before this training, restorative conferences in the secondary school had been facilitated by a police officer. Following the training, school staff began to lead conference facilitation.

Six days of training were delivered by an independent consultant and the Yot education liaison manager. Six staff from the secondary school and one member of staff from each of the five primary schools were taken through the five-stage Transforming Conflict approach (Hopkins, 2004). Staff from the primary schools comprised a head teacher, two deputy heads and two learning support assistants (LSAs).

The head teacher dropped out of the training at an early stage and, in view of this, only four of the primary schools were effectively implementing restorative practices. Table 3.9 shows some of the key data collected about the schools at the beginning of the study.

Table 3.9: Key baseline data from Oxfordshire schools

School code variable	A	NP	B Primary	C Primary	D Primary	E Primary
School roll	n/a	1,123	492	263	124	n/a
% pupils receiving free school meals	n/a	9	10	16	9	n/a
% pupils attaining 5 A–C grades	n/a	40				
% pupils reading at/above their age			75	n/a	85	n/a
Fixed-term exclusions	n/a	146	0	0	0	n/a
Permanent exclusions	6	1	0	0	0	n/a
% unauthorised absence	n/a	5.5	0.1	1	0.1	n/a
Number of days lost due to staff sickness	n/a	910	410	n/a	n/a	n/a

Two other rounds of training for other schools were planned, although only one went ahead. As a result, six additional days were available for visiting the Banbury schools and giving them each an additional day's training (twilight in-service education and training [INSET] sessions and consultancy).

A total of 10 formal conferences were run by school staff during Restorative Justice in Schools, although support was available from the police officer, if needed, for more serious cases. No conferences were officially recorded in the primary schools, although at least one very successful conference took place in one of the primary schools at the request of a pupil who had been the victim of inappropriate touching (sexual assault) by another pupil. In another school, the conference format is used in an informal way to allow turn-taking and perspective-sharing but, again, these events were not recorded, so there is no evidence of the numbers. Circle time was introduced in two primary schools, while the training reinvigorated circle time in another (the fourth school already had an active programme of circle time before Restorative Justice in Schools).

Rhondda Cynon Taff

Rhondda Cynon Taff Yot initially worked with three secondary schools in the Rhondda Valley in South Wales, a former mining area still trying to recover from the loss of much of its industry. Table 3.10 shows some of the key data collected about the schools at the beginning of the study. Two more schools were recruited with additional funding from the Welsh Assembly Government, but these were not included in the Restorative Justice in Schools evaluation.

Table 3.10: Key baseline data from Rhondda Cynon Taff schools

School code variable	A	B	C	NP
School roll	754	796	1,268	1,135
% pupils receiving free school meals	29	39	30	22
% pupils attaining 5 A–C grades	47	43	38	45
Fixed-term exclusions	60	70	85	126
Permanent exclusions	0	0	0	0
% unauthorised absence	2.6	4.2	3.8	1.9
Number of days lost due to staff sickness	649	634	937	283

Initial training was provided to the Yot staff and key staff from each of the schools. A total of 34 conferences took place at the three schools in the Restorative Justice in Schools programme, all of which were facilitated by the Yot restorative justice co-ordinator, who visited each of the programme schools for one day per week (although one of the schools received less frequent visits).

The three schools in the Restorative Justice in Schools programme were very different in character. One could be described as being very progressive, piloting initiatives such as the Welsh Baccalaureate and a positive learning programme for staff from the Pacific Institute. Most of the restorative conferences in Rhondda Cynon Taff took place in this school (where the Yot restorative justice co-ordinator also helped to deliver conflict resolution modules in PSHE). Four conferences were held at one of the other schools, and just one at the other. These two schools (one of which was a boys' school) were more traditional and inward-looking, with mostly long-serving staff, who were facing new problems such as the emergence of a drugs culture in the local community. Implementation in these two schools was also hampered by a dispute with the local teachers' union, where staff were working to rule and unable to attend any meetings in the lunch break or after school.

A two-day network and training session was organised in early 2004 to share the good practice from the school that had successfully implemented restorative conferences, and to encourage staff from other schools to become more involved (but this was postponed due to heavy snow). A rolling programme of training was to be implemented for school staff between March and July 2004, after the Restorative Justice in Schools pilot funding had ceased. The Rhondda Cynon Taff Yot was successful in gaining a further £200,000 from the Welsh Assembly Government to continue the implementation of restorative conferencing in the existing schools and some of their primary feeders for two years from April 2004. In the school that had successfully implemented restorative conferences, there was a plan to train sixth formers to become peer mediators as part of their Welsh Baccalaureate.

Somerset

Somerset Yot worked with one large comprehensive school in Bridgewater. Initially, a police officer was available to facilitate conferences half a day per week. As the initiative progressed, the facilitation of conferences was contracted out to the local mediation service. A total of 42 conferences were held at the school. Table 3.11 shows some of the key data collected on the schools at the beginning of the study.

A training video was produced to be used to help introduce the initiative in other schools after the initial Restorative Justice in Schools had ended.

Table 3.11: Key baseline data from Somerset schools

School code variable	A	NP
School roll	580	1,041
% pupils receiving free school meals	24	14
% pupils attaining 5 A–C grades	33	47
Fixed-term exclusions	140	135
Permanent exclusions	4	5
% unauthorised absence	2.2	1.2
Number of days lost due to staff sickness	n/a	302

Summary

Table 3.12 summarises the key baseline data across the secondary schools in the Restorative Justice in Schools evaluation research. Primary schools have been excluded from this table as they are generally smaller than the secondary schools and because there were no non-programme primary schools. This table shows the large variations between all schools in the research.

Table 3.12: Range of key data within and between programme and non-programme schools

Variable	Programme schools		Non-programme schools	
	Lowest	Highest	Lowest	Highest
School roll	510	1254	580	1530
% pupils receiving free school meals	11	80	7	63
% pupils attaining 5 A-C grades	13	60	32	41
Fixed-term exclusions	22	252	34	358
Permanent exclusions	0	12	0	24
% unauthorised absence	0.6	8.5	0.6	3.8
Number of days lost due to staff sickness	75	731	117	1,196

4 Outcomes of the restorative justice conferences

4.1 Introduction

The findings in this chapter are drawn from the monitoring data compiled by the Yot, restorative justice co-ordinators and school liaison staff, as well as from the post-conference interviews and interviews with Yot and school staff.

All schools and Yots were provided with a standard one-page tick-box monitoring form to gather key data from each conference. While many schools and Yots complied with this request to monitor the conferences, others were less forthcoming, despite the fact that the forms were designed to be completed in two to three minutes. As such, there are gaps in the data available. Of the 625 'official' conferences that were run, full information is available on only 349 (56%). In addition, much more limited data are available on a further 176 conferences run at the school that had conducted the most conferences (in Hammersmith and Fulham), despite constant requests from the evaluation team. As a result, the data in this section are drawn from 525 conferences (84%). The gaps in the data mean that it is not possible to report in full the demographic characteristics of those attending conferences, the sources of referral, their risk level for exclusion, and the incidents that precipitated the conference.

Post-conference interviews were conducted by the evaluation team with 538 of the 1,434 people who were the main parties in conferences (38% of all the main parties), of whom a sample of 166 were reinterviewed two to three months after the conference to see if the conference agreements had been upheld (31% of those interviewed and 12% of all main conference parties). Interviews were also conducted with 26 facilitators and 25 of the 220 conference supporters (11%).

4.2 What is a conference?

One of the challenges in the Restorative Justice in Schools programme was defining what counted as a conference. Each area obtained their initial training from a variety of providers (Thames Valley Police, Nottingham Local Education Authority, Real Justice, Transforming Conflict, KW Consulting and Crime Concern) and the Youth Justice Board was not prescriptive in its definition of how restorative justice should be implemented. Consequently different areas counted different things as conferences. Some used the concepts of short or informal conferences (which were not recorded in the monitoring); others, those of long or formal conferences (which were recorded for monitoring purposes). Others took a formal scripted approach, while some adopted a rather more open-ended model that followed a framework or structure without a script.

Primary schools in Oxford used the structures informally, and so none of the conference processes was counted as official conferences while, in Medway, primary schools used a variety of informal conferences (which were also not counted as conferences) and formal conferences (which were counted in the monitoring process).

We have a nurturing LSA [learning support assistant] who is not attached to a particular class who uses restorative justice approaches. We don't do formal conferences, but we use the format and ethos to resolve more persistent problems. The process she runs with pupils aims to establish why they did what they did, what impact it had on the other person or people, and what they would need to do to put it right. We call it 'repair time'.

(Head teacher, primary school)

Secondary schools in Blackpool only counted formal conferences led by the Yot (always for pupil-teacher disputes) as conferences, while conference processes run by the learning mentors were not counted, since the learning mentors thought that these were not official conferences, even though many were formal and structured. Peer mediation was used to resolve conflicts between pupils.

No-one from the Yot told us that we could record the cases that we ran as being conferences. We've done many more than the records show.

(Learning mentor)

Secondary schools in other areas counted long conferences as part of their monitoring, but not short or informal conferences/mediations. This means that the data on conferences are incomplete and do not represent all the conferences and mediations that took place.

4.3 Sources of referrals to conferences

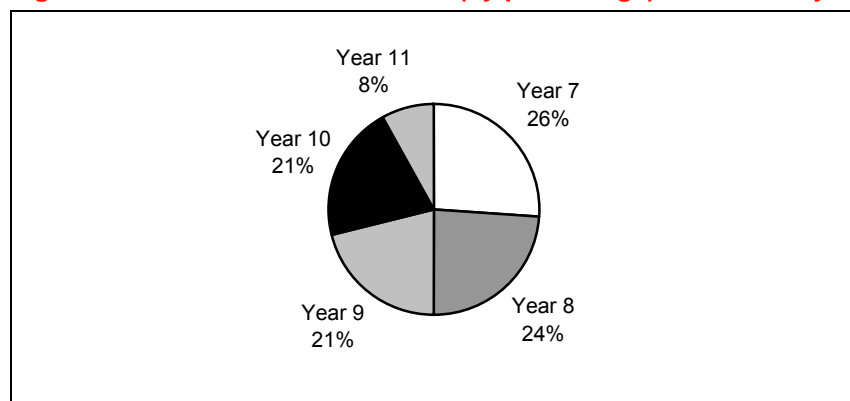
From the monitoring data available, 90% of referrals to conferences came from the school staff, with 2% from the police, 1% from the Yot, and 7% from other sources (mainly young people, their parents and Connexions staff).

4.4 Demographic characteristics of pupils attending conferences

Roughly equal numbers of boys and girls attended conferences (50.5% against 49.5%, respectively).

Figures 4.1 and 4.2 show the age profile (school year groups) of the pupils attending conferences in secondary and primary schools.

Figure 4.1: Number of conferences (by percentage) in secondary schools



In secondary schools, conference participants were mainly drawn in equal proportions from Years 7 to 10, with a sharp decline in Year 11 (the reason for this is not known, although it could be due to the focus on GCSEs). Conferences peak in Year 7, and show a slow decrease across Years 8, 9 and 10. In primary schools, conferences were first reported in Year 3, with a steady rise in numbers to a peak in Year 6.

Figure 4.2: Number of conferences (by percentage) in primary schools

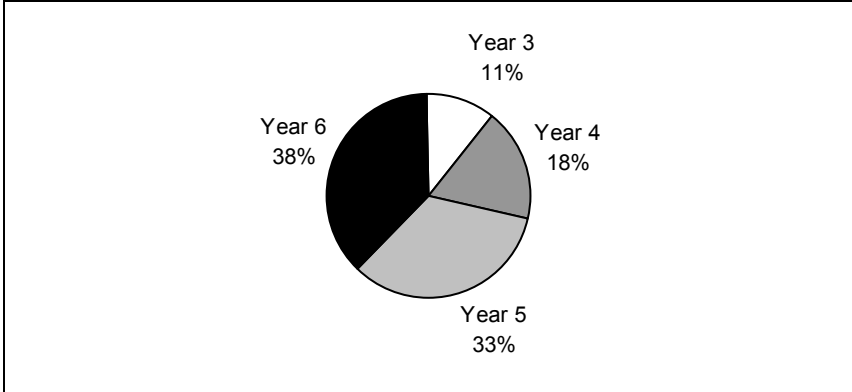
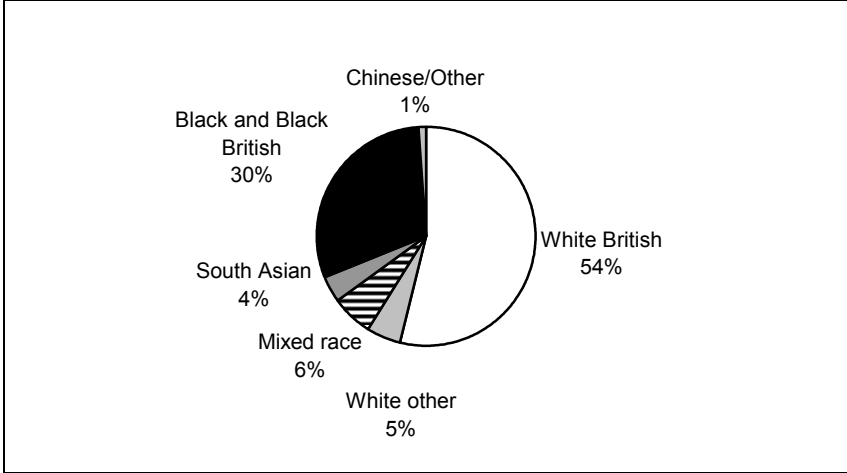


Figure 4.3 shows the ethnicity of pupils attending conferences (combined across primary and secondary schools). The data show that conferences have been run with pupils from a diverse range of ethnic backgrounds (41% were black and minority ethnic). Of the pupils involved in conferences, 3% were reported to have English as an additional language.

Figure 4.3: Ethnicity of pupils attending conferences (all schools)



Of pupils involved in conferences, 4% had been statemented as having special needs (stages 3 to 5), while a further 5% were classified as being school action special needs, and 2% were classified as school action plus. Less than half of 1% were on a special supportive curriculum.

Table 4.1 shows key exclusion and risk data on the pupils involved in conferences (combined across primary and secondary schools).

Table 4.1: Pupil exclusion and risk data (all schools)

Characteristic	Percent
Excluded before the conference	2
At risk of temporary exclusion	19
Previous temporary exclusion from school	9
Previous permanent exclusion from previous school	0.5
History of physical or verbal assault on staff	2

4.5 The types of incident that led to formal conferences

Conferences were used in response to a variety of issues, as shown in Table 4.2 in declining rank order and summarised in Figure 4.4. Seven of the secondary schools and one of the primary schools reported that conferences had been deployed in response to criminal offences (both in and outside of the school).

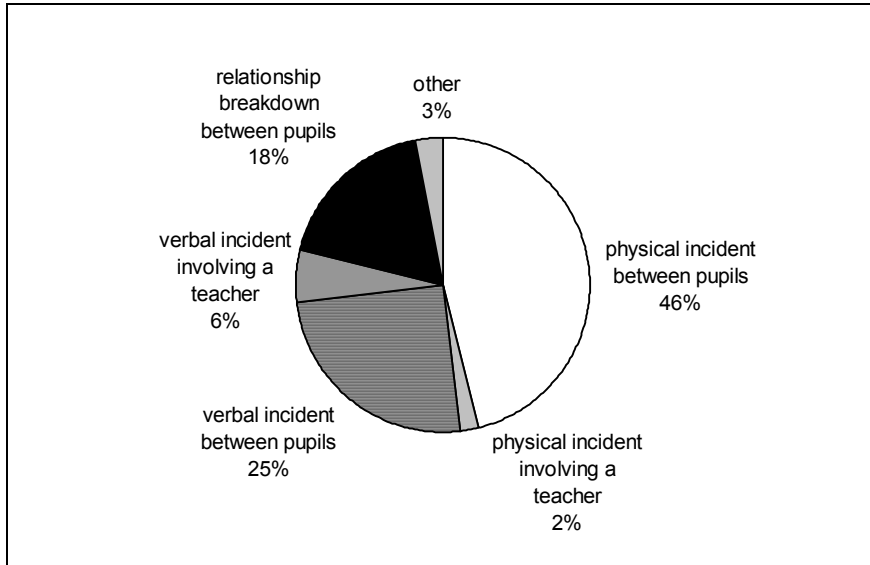
Boys were twice as likely as girls to be involved in incidents involving physical violence, while girls were three times more likely than boys to be involved in name calling and gossip.

Table 4.2: Reasons for conferences (in declining rank order)

Most common reasons for calling a conference	Less frequent reasons for calling a conference
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ bullying▪ assault/violent behaviour▪ name-calling▪ verbal abuse▪ family feuds▪ friendship/relationship breakdowns▪ incidents involving teachers▪ gossip▪ incidents outside school▪ theft	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ abusive mobile text messages▪ racial abuse▪ gang fights▪ threats▪ truancy▪ possession of weapons

Almost a quarter (24%) of conferences were used to resolve long-term disputes, while 8% involved a third party.

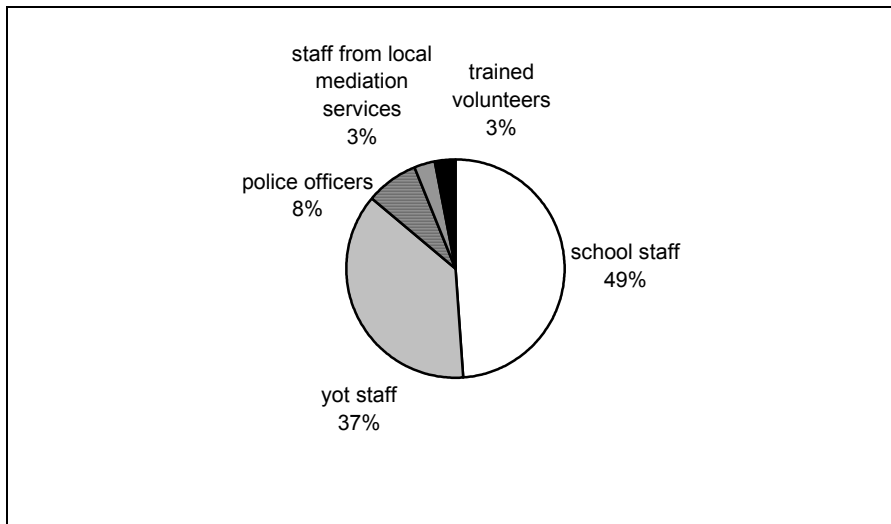
Figure 4.4: Summary of types of incidents (all schools)



4.6 Profile of conference facilitators

Almost half (49%) of conferences were facilitated by school staff, while over a third (37%) were facilitated by Yot staff. Other facilitators that were external to the school included police officers (8%), staff from local mediation services (3%) and trained volunteers (3%), as shown in Figure 4.5.

Figure 4.5: Profile of conference facilitators



4.7 Parental involvement in conferences

Less than a fifth (19%) of conferences involved parents as parties to the conference. Parents were routinely involved in conferences in just five schools, although a further 10 schools involved parents in more serious incidents. Parents were not involved in 11 schools.

We had one parent attend who had a really bad opinion of the school. After the conference, they went away with a completely different view of the school. We have a much more constructive relationship now.

(Head teacher)

We involve parents whenever we can, mainly when the incident is serious. It takes time to make all the calls, and this is really important. We let them know that everyone will have a chance to have their say and to be listened to. We stress that your child is not a bad child and that you are not a bad parent. We need you to come into the school because so-and-so is happening and we want to work together to solve it. When they come in we are not in the head's office and no one is laying down the law to them. They see me as a person who's there to resolve the issue. It's not threatening for them because we make sure that it is not so.

(School counsellor/Restorative justice facilitator)

It makes a huge difference having the parents in the conference. It enables them to have a voice, and it shows that the school is trying to work with them, rather against them.

(Yot restorative justice co-ordinator/facilitator)

When parents are involved they have a high opinion of the school. They see how everyone has a voice.

(Special needs education manager)

Involvement of parents makes the process seem more serious for young people. We prefer to involve parents only in more serious incidents.

(Yot restorative justice co-ordinator/facilitator)

Sometimes having parents involved is a good thing, and sometimes it's a bad thing. It does help you to see where the problem stems from though. But, on the whole, restorative justice conferences are a very powerful tool to get the school, the child and the parents all working together.

(Assistant head, secondary school)

I came into the school feeling very angry, but the woman running the meeting was very reassuring and didn't talk down to me. Listening to what was being said made me realise that my son did have a case to answer and that it wasn't just the school picking on him.

(Parent)

I was impressed with the process. I felt that what I had to say was important and the other boy was surprised by what I said. I think it made a difference to the way he thought about what he had done. It was good to hear his apology.

(Parent)

Telephone calls were the most frequently used means of engaging parents, but home visits were made by Yot staff in three schools (including both the Blackpool schools) as a way of engaging the parents.

Getting parents involved is not that difficult, especially if you go out and see them – meet them on their territory. When you meet them, you can explain the process to them – that it will be safe and comfortable for them to come into the school, that we are all there to support their child and their progress in school.

(Yot restorative justice co-ordinator/facilitator)

4.8 Agreements reached in conferences

The vast majority of conferences (92%) resulted in successful agreements between the parties. These ranged from apologies, repaired friendships/relationships, agreements to desist from the behaviour that led to the conference and agreements to maintain distance between the parties, through to formal reparation.

It has been very effective. It has worked with some of the toughest pupils in the school and the agreements have largely been upheld. It has reduced the cycle of retaliations after incidents, and has reduced aggressive behaviour in those that have been involved.

(Social inclusion assistant)

The conferences help young people to separate facts from emotions. It has helped perpetrators to be more aware of the effects of their actions and to take responsibility, particularly where they thought things were just a joke, and they had not realised the impact their behaviour was having on their victims. It has also helped to increase the confidence of victims.

(Deputy head, secondary school)

I know from the children that I have worked with that have been through restorative justice, that it has made a big impact on them. Some became the best of friends – others simply agreed to say hello and stay apart.

(Head of year)

I think it has been very successful. Out of the 15 cases I have referred, only one has not been successful – the child was permanently excluded for something else.

(Head of year)

It is very effective because it emphasises the reaching of a negotiated agreement.

(Deputy head, secondary school)

It has been a good resource. It has helped to resolve a number of conflicts including some longstanding feuds.

(Head of inclusion)

Two of our boys vandalised a primary school last week. Conferences were used to bring the boys face-to-face with staff from the school, during which apologies were made and reparation agreed. This is very powerful.

(Head teacher, secondary school)

Only 6% of conferences failed to result in a satisfactory agreement, while agreements had not yet been reached in a further 2% of cases that were on-going at the time of reporting.

It was a conference where a child had sworn at one of my learning support staff. The child concerned wouldn't speak. It made her [the person offended against] feel wronged. I won't attend another conference.

(Emotional and behavioural difficulties teacher)

There were no underlying trends in either the demographic features of participants, nor the types of incident that failed to reach an agreement.

Only 4% of agreements had been subsequently broken at the time of follow-up at three months.

The majority of agreements have been sustained.

(Head of year)

It has managed to support real and demonstrable behaviour changes among some pupils who have been involved in the process.

(Head of year)

Conference agreements have been sustained on the whole.

(Head of inclusion)

It has been very effective and has worked with some of the toughest young people in the school. They have been less likely to revert to aggression.

(Social inclusion officer)

It has not been very effective. The conferences themselves were good but the agreements were short lived.

(Head of in school PRU)

4.9 Pupil satisfaction with the process

Pupils reported high levels of satisfaction with the process of participating in conferences, with 89% of pupils reporting that they were satisfied with the outcome of the conferences and 93% reporting that they thought that the process was fair and that justice had been done.

It is a very effective approach. It supports the young people in reflecting on their own behaviour and ownership of their actions.

(Yot restorative justice co-ordinator)

Conferences have resulted in victims being more confident in themselves.

(Head teacher, secondary school)

It was a chance to sort things out, to get over what had happened before, and start again for the future.

(Year 6 boy)

Having an opportunity to be listened to and heard was the most important part of the process:

What was best was that she told the truth. I expected her to make up all sorts of lies about me.

(Year 7 girl)

We all told the truth. I think it was because we were all in the room together and listening to what everybody was saying. It made it harder not to tell the truth. I'm glad I didn't tell fibs because it was all sorted out in the end.

(Year 6 boy)

Bringing everyone together to sort things out is better because you can hear what one another say, instead of being separate. It cuts down on people lying.

(Year 8 boy)

The teachers treated us the same. We were both allowed to make our points of view, but no one person got more time than the other. It was fair.

(Year 9 girl)

Everyone gets to say their views. In an exclusion, all you get is a letter which doesn't help sort things out that much.

(Year 8 boy)

It was fair. We both had our say. It didn't take long to sort out. There was no yelling or shouting. It was good.

(Year 8 boy)

We both had the chance to tell our side of things without being interrupted. It made a change for adults to listen to us. I felt respected, as a person, rather than being treated as a child and told what to do.

(Year 8 boy)

It was very calm – no-one was shouting. It felt good to be listened to; we were treated fairly.

(Year 9 girl)

Amazingly, kids tell the truth. The process allows them to be respected. People take their turns, they have their say... they feel listened to. They aren't talked down to... they can say what they feel.

(Police officer/Restorative justice facilitator)

5 Whole-school results and findings

5.1 Introduction

This chapter reports on the quantitative evidence from the pupil and teacher surveys on changes in the school environment following the introduction of restorative approaches, as well as from the key stakeholder interviews.

It is important to remember that the schools in Hammersmith and Fulham, and Lambeth had three years to develop and implement restorative conferencing, while the other seven Yot areas only had 18 months from the announcement of the funding to the end of the initial Restorative Justice in Schools programme.

It took a while to embed at this school. There was already a well defined pastoral system to deal with behavioural issues. What it took was a clear case to use restorative justice. Once we had some experience in using it, it became clearer what it could be used for. And once we developed confidence in using it successfully, we began to refer more and more cases to it.

(Head of house, Lambeth school)

It takes more than a year to implement a five-stage, whole-school model!

(Yot staff)

It is not unreasonable then to expect that findings from the pupils and teacher survey in the Hammersmith and Fulham, and Lambeth (which aim to measure how far the introduction of restorative approaches have permeated the school culture to make an impact on the school environment) will be different from the programme data as a whole.

5.2 Findings from the pupil surveys

Section 1.3 described how the surveys from certain schools were excluded. The remaining data was analysed using SPSS (a statistical software package) and chi-square tests were performed to see if there were significant differences (unlikely to have occurred by chance alone) between the baseline and end of programme surveys on key variables.

The findings from the pupil surveys are complex. Overall, there were no statistically significant differences in attitudes or levels of victimisation between the baseline and follow-up surveys between the programme and the non-programme schools. The programme schools as a whole showed more improvement in the attitudes of pupils than the non-programme schools, but these data were not significant. For example, there was a 7% increase in the percentage of pupils who thought that their school was doing a good job at stopping bullying in programme schools (from 45% to 52%), while there was a 1% decrease in the percentage of pupils who thought that their school was doing a good job at stopping bullying in non-programme schools (from 38% to 37%). Similarly, there was a 7% decrease in the percentage of pupils who thought that bullying was a problem at their school in programme schools (from 63% to 56%), while there was only a 3% decrease in the percentage of pupils who thought that bullying was a problem at their school in non-programme schools (from 65% to 62%).

Greater improvements were evident when comparing the performance of the programme schools in Hammersmith and Fulham, and Lambeth (which had been implementing restorative conferences for between one to two years longer than in the other seven areas) but, again, these were mostly not statistically significant (with three exceptions). Table 5.1 shows the changes between the two surveys on key pupil attitudes and behaviours for the secondary programme schools, the secondary non-programme schools, the Lambeth/Hammersmith and Fulham programme schools, and all the primary schools (there were no non-programme primaries for comparisons).

Table 5.1: Changes (by percentage) between the two surveys on key pupil attitudes and behaviours for the secondary programme schools, the secondary non-programme schools, the Lambeth/Hammersmith and Fulham programme schools, and all the primary schools

	Programme schools 2°	Non-programme schools 2°	Lambeth/Hammersmith and Fulham programme schools	1° schools
Pupils reporting that they:				
had been bullied in the last month	+1	+1	-1	no change
did not feel safe at school	no change	no change	-6	no change
had skipped lessons because of bullying	-1	-6 the baseline scores were much higher than the programme schools	+1	+3
had never been hit or kicked	no change	+4	no change	+2
had been hit or kicked a lot	-2	-2	-3	-3
had never had things taken from them without their knowing	-2	-1	-3	no change
had things taken from them a lot without their knowing	+1	no change	no change	+1
had never been verbally threatened	no change	no change	+2	+1
had been verbally threatened a lot	-2	+2	-2	no change
had never been called racist names	+4	+3	+11*	+8
had been called racist names a lot	-1	-1	-3	no change
had never been isolated	+3	+2	+8	+4
had been isolated a lot	no change	no change	-2	-3
had told a teacher that they were being bullied	+1	+1	no change	+3
thought that their school was doing “a good job” at stopping bullying	+7	-1	+10*	-5
thought that bullying was a serious problem at their school	-7	-3	-23*	+1
thought that telling a teacher about bullying was “grassing”	-2	+2	-2	-2

*= statistically significant $p < 0.05$

Points of most interest from Table 5.1 are as follows.

- There has been a reduction in racist name-calling in all schools including non-programme schools. But the reduction was slightly greater in the programme secondary schools than the non-programme secondary schools (plus 4% versus plus 3%). The reduction has been greater still in the primary programme schools (8%) and even greater and statistically significant in the Lambeth/Hammersmith and Fulham schools (11%; $p < 0.05$).
- There has been an increase in the percentage of pupils who think that their school is doing a good job of stopping bullying in the programme secondary schools (7%). But the percentage has been even greater and statistically significant in the Lambeth/Hammersmith and Fulham schools (10%; $p < 0.05$). Curiously, there has been a 5% decrease in the percentage of pupils that think that their school is doing a good job at stopping bullying in the programme primary schools.
- There has been a reduction in pupils thinking that bullying is a serious problem in all secondary schools, including the non-programme schools. But the reduction has been slightly greater in the programme secondary schools than the non-programme secondary schools (minus 7% versus minus 3%). The reduction has been greater and statistically significant in the Lambeth/Hammersmith and Fulham schools (minus 23%; $p < 0.05$). Conversely, there has been a small increase in the primary programme schools (plus 1%).
- There has been a small decrease across the board in both secondary and primary programme schools in regarding telling a teacher about bullying as “grassing” (minus 2%), while there has been a 2% increase in the non-programme schools.

The results of the pupil surveys are stronger still in Lambeth compared to Hammersmith and Fulham. This is partly due to the fact that the implementation of restorative justice has been variable in Hammersmith and Fulham due to changes in leadership in one of the programme schools (with a preference for punishment and exclusion that undermined the programme for several months), while staff morale at the other programme school dropped dramatically when the school was put under special measures.

Table 5.2 shows changes between the two surveys on key pupil attitudes and behaviours for the programme and non-programme schools in Hammersmith and Fulham, and Lambeth. Points of most interest from Table 5.2 are as follows.

- Bullying has decreased in the Lambeth programme schools by 4% and 7%, while it has increased in all the other schools, with the greatest increases occurring in the non-programme schools (5% and 13%).
- Verbal threats significantly decreased in the Lambeth schools, with an increase of 13% of pupils reporting that they have not been verbally threatened by another pupil in the past month ($p < 0.05$)

Table 5.2: Changes (by percentage) between the two surveys on key pupil attitudes and behaviour for the programme and non-programme schools in Lambeth/Hammersmith and Fulham

	Lambeth schools			Hammersmith and Fulham schools		
	Prog 1	Prog 2	Non-prog	Prog 1	Prog 2	Non-prog
Pupils reporting that they:						
Have been bullied in the last month	-4	-7	+5	+1	+4	+13
Did not feel safe at school	-4	-9	-5	no change	+3	+10
Had skipped lessons because of bullying	-3	+2	+8	+2	-4	-1
Had never been hit or kicked	+2	+14*	+5	-20*	+6	-11
Had been hit or kicked a lot	-5	-8	no change	+2	-1	+6
Had never had things taken from them without their knowing	-1	-1	no change	+4	-4	-14
Had things taken from them a lot without their knowing	-1	+1	+4	no change	+1	+7
Had never been verbally threatened	+13*	+13*	-3	-16	+2	-23
Had been verbally threatened a lot	-3	-7	+2	+2	-1	+8
Had never been called racist names	+1	+15*	-2	+19*	+9	no change
Had been called racist names a lot	+1	-6	-1	-2	-3	+5
Had never been isolated	+10	+12*	+4	+2	+8	-10
Had been isolated a lot	-4	-3	+2	-1	no change	+6
Had told a teacher that they were being bullied	-8	-5	+10	+5	+2	+9
Thought that their school was doing “a good job” at stopping bullying	+11*	+39*	+7	-6	-6	-25*
Thought that bullying was a serious problem at their school	-28*	-42*	+2	-19*	-10	-3
Thought that telling a teacher about bullying was “grassing”	-8	-9	-3	+9	no change	-10

*= statistically significant $p < 0.05$

- Racist name-calling was reduced in all the programme schools, while it remained static or increased in the non-programme schools. Racist name-calling decreased significantly in one of the Lambeth and one of the Hammersmith and Fulham schools, by 15% and 19% respectively ($p < 0.05$).
- Pupils in the Lambeth programme schools reported statistically significant increases in their perception that their school was doing a good job at stopping bullying (11% and 39%; $p < 0.05$).

- Similarly, pupils in the Lambeth programme schools and in one of the Hammersmith and Fulham schools reported statistically significant decreases in their perception that bullying was a serious problem at their school (28%, 42% and 19% respectively; $p < 0.05$).

These results should be treated with some caution, as they include only a small number of schools. The evaluation design was not intended to look at differences within single schools or across small groups of schools but, given that the Hammersmith and Fulham, and Lambeth schools had been implementing restorative conferences for a longer period of time, the sub-group analysis was warranted.

Other important findings from schools in the other seven areas (issued with similar caveats) include the following.

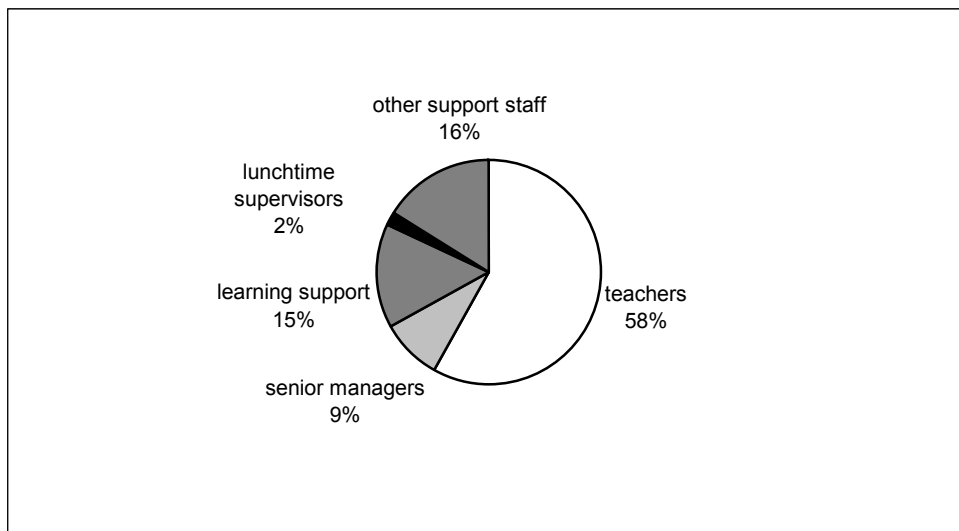
- At one of the Barnet programme schools, there was a 16% reduction in pupils reporting that they had been hit or kicked by other pupils, and a 9% reduction in theft.
- In another of the Barnet programme schools, there was a 10% reduction in pupils reporting that they had been hit or kicked by other pupils, and an 8% reduction in theft; they also reported a 14% reduction in racist name-calling, and a 9% reduction in being isolated by other pupils.
- In one of the Blackpool programme schools, there was an 8% reduction in the pupils reporting that they did not feel safe at school, a 17% reduction in pupils reporting that they had been hit or kicked by other pupils, an 8% reduction in theft, a 10% decrease in rumour spreading, a 14% reduction in bullying, a 9% increase in pupils thinking that the school was doing a good job in stopping bullying, an 18% decrease in the perception that bullying was a serious problem at their school, and an 11% reduction in pupils thinking that telling a teacher about bullying was “grassing”.
- Pupils from the Blackpool non-programme school also reported some significant changes between the two surveys. There was a 10% reduction in spreading rumours; 11% more reported that they had not been isolated by other pupils in the past month; and there was an increase of 15% in pupils thinking that the school was doing a good job in stopping bullying ($p < 0.05$). Although this school was not implementing restorative justice, there had been a concerted effort to introduce a whole-school behaviour management policy. This shows that a thoroughly implemented positive whole-school behaviour policy can also be effective, underlying the importance of young people receiving consistent messages from staff at school through a whole-school approach.
- Pupils at the primary school in Medway reported a 10% reduction in spreading rumours, an 8% reduction in racist name calling, and a 17% increase in pupils thinking that the school was doing a good job in stopping bullying.
- Pupils in one of the programme schools in Rhondda Cynon Taff recorded a 36% increase in thinking that the school was doing a good job in stopping bullying, and a 14% reduction in pupils thinking that telling a teacher about bullying is grassing ($p < 0.05$).

- In Somerset, there was an 8% reduction in reported bullying in the programme school, and a 14% increase in thinking that the school was doing a good job in stopping bullying. Meanwhile, in the non-programme school, pupils reported an 11% increase in rumour spreading, and an 11% decrease in thinking that the school was doing a good job in stopping bullying.

5.3 Findings from the staff surveys

More than half of staff that completed the staff questionnaires were teachers (58%). The profile of the staff taking part in the surveys is shown in Figure 5.1. Almost half (49%) had been at their school for three years or less; 22% had been at their school for four to 10 years; almost a quarter (22%) had been at their school for 11 to 20 years; and 17% had been at the same school for 21 or more years. A third (32%) of those completing questionnaires were male and two-thirds (68%) female.

Figure 5.1: Profile of staff completing questionnaires



Survey findings about pupil behaviour showed that there had been a significant improvement in pupil behaviour in the programme schools, while behaviour had declined in the non-programme schools. Of staff in programme schools, 6% more reported that pupil behaviour had improved since the introduction of restorative approaches (statistically significant $p < 0.05$), while there was a 5% decrease in staff in non-programme schools who reported that pupil behaviour had improved. There was a 9% reduction of staff in programme schools who reported that pupil behaviour had worsened between the two surveys, while there was an increase of 12% of staff at non-programme schools who reported that pupil behaviour had worsened, as shown in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3: Staff views of changes in pupil behaviour between the two surveys (by percentage)

Staff reporting that pupil behaviour had:	Programme schools		Non-programme schools	
	Baseline	Second survey	Baseline	Second survey
Improved	12	18	23	18
Stayed the same	37	40	38	31
Worsened	51	42	39	51
	statistical significance $p < 0.05$		not statistically significant	

There were small increases (not statistically significant) in both programme and non-programme schools in staff reporting that they felt their schools had adequate strategies for dealing with poor pupil behaviour.

While there was a small increase in staff in non-programme schools believing that fixed-term exclusions were an effective strategy in dealing with behaviour problems (from 36% to 38%, not statistically significant), there was no change in staff views about the effectiveness of fixed-term exclusions in the programme schools (42%).

There was a similar decrease in the proportion of staff at both programme schools and non-programme schools who reported that exclusions were the best way to deal with behaviour problems, as shown in Table 5.4. These figures show that a majority of staff still believe that exclusions are the best approach to dealing with behaviour problems.

Table 5.4: Staff views about exclusions being the best way to deal with behaviour problems (by percentage)

Exclusions are the best way to deal with behaviour problems:	Programme schools		Non-programme schools	
	Baseline	Second survey	Baseline	Second survey
Agree	53	46	57	51
Disagree	47	54	43	49
	no statistical significance		no statistical significance	

Teachers in programme schools reported in the second survey that they lost less of their teaching time dealing with behaviour problems during lesson time than they reported at baseline (statistically significant $p < 0.05$), while teachers in non-programme schools reported no significant improvements, as shown in Table 5.5.

There were no changes between the surveys in either the programme or non-programme schools of staff reporting that the school was a good place to work or a safe place to work.

Table 5.5: Teachers' self-report about the amount of their teaching time lost dealing with behaviour problems between the two surveys (by percentage)

Percentage of lesson time lost dealing with bad behaviour	Programme schools		Non-programme schools	
	Baseline	Second survey	Baseline	Second survey
Less than 10%	24	34	14	25
Between 10%–30 %	56	41	51	40
Between 31%–50%	15	20	24	27
More than 50%	5	5	11	8
	statistical significance $p < 0.05$		no statistical significance	

There was a significant increase in staff reporting that they knew about restorative justice in the programme schools ($p < 0.05$), while there was only a very small increase in the non-programme schools, as shown in Table 5.6. However, just under half (43%) of all staff in programme schools reported at the end of the Restorative Justice in Schools programme that they knew either nothing or not very much about restorative justice. This is an important finding as it indicates the lack of information and INSET about restorative justice, as is evidence of a lack of a whole-school approach to its implementation.

Table 5.6: Teachers' self-report about their knowledge about restorative justice between the two surveys (by percentage)

How much would you say that you know about restorative justice?	Programme schools		Non-programme schools	
	Baseline	Second survey	Baseline	Second survey
Nothing	29	18	42	38
Not very much	36	25	38	37
A little	29	42	17	19
Quite a lot	6	15	3	6
	statistical significance $p < 0.05$		no statistical significance	

Of the staff in programme schools who reported that they knew quite a lot about restorative justice, when asked to briefly describe the key features of restorative justice, 7% were unable to correctly identify any of the key features and were quite wrong in their assumptions. The following quotations illustrate their misconceptions:

If the situation gets really bad, a code 6 is called, which means senior managers are sent to remove the pupil.

It's like detention. They are made to clean up graffiti after school.

A punishment where offenders confront victims.

5.4 The impact of restorative justice on school exclusions

The most recent Annual Youth Crime Survey (MORI, 2004) shows that young people excluded from school are more than twice as likely to commit offences than young people in mainstream school (60% versus 26%). Therefore, it is important to try to determine the impact of restorative justice on school exclusions.

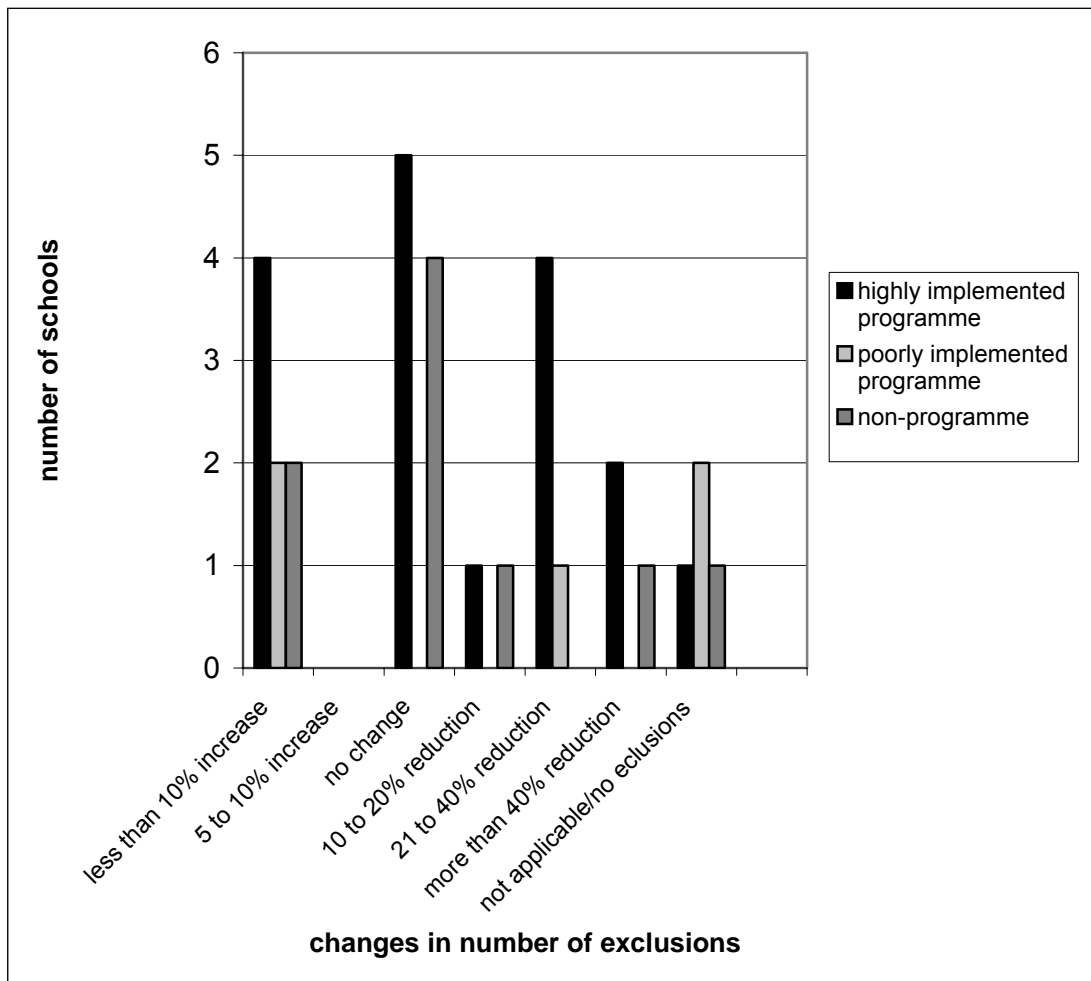
It is difficult to ascertain exactly the impact of restorative justice practices on schools using exclusion data, as exclusions are affected by a number of variables. First, schools have developed a number of strategies to reduce their exclusion figures. Several of the schools in this study had developed a special place in the school to which internal exclusions could be made (often called the inclusion room), greatly reducing the need for official temporary exclusions. Second, none of the primary schools and only three of the four Welsh schools in the study had made any fixed-term exclusions during the period for which the key data were collected. Third, there were multiple interventions in all schools to improve behaviour and to reduce exclusions, making it impossible to tease out the effect that restorative justice had had on reducing exclusions.

Twelve of the programme schools in the study used restorative justice in some way in relation to exclusions, either to prevent exclusions or to reintegrate pupils excluded for a fixed term on re-entry to school. Eight of the schools regularly used restorative conferences to try to avert an exclusion, while nine schools used conferences as a reintegration tool following exclusion.

Figure 5.2 shows that there was no consistent pattern for the implementation of restorative justice and exclusions. Out of the 16 secondary schools that could be considered to have implemented restorative practices to some degree and for which we have data, the number of fixed-term exclusions increased by more than 10% in four schools; remained roughly the same in five schools; decreased by between 10% and 20% in one school; decreased by 20% and 40% in four schools; and decreased by more than 40% in 2 schools. One of the programme schools had not made any fixed-term exclusions during the two years for which the data were requested. In the five low implementation schools, fixed-term exclusions increased by more than 10% in two schools, fixed-term exclusions were reduced by 20% to 40% in one school, while the remaining two schools had not made any fixed-term exclusions.

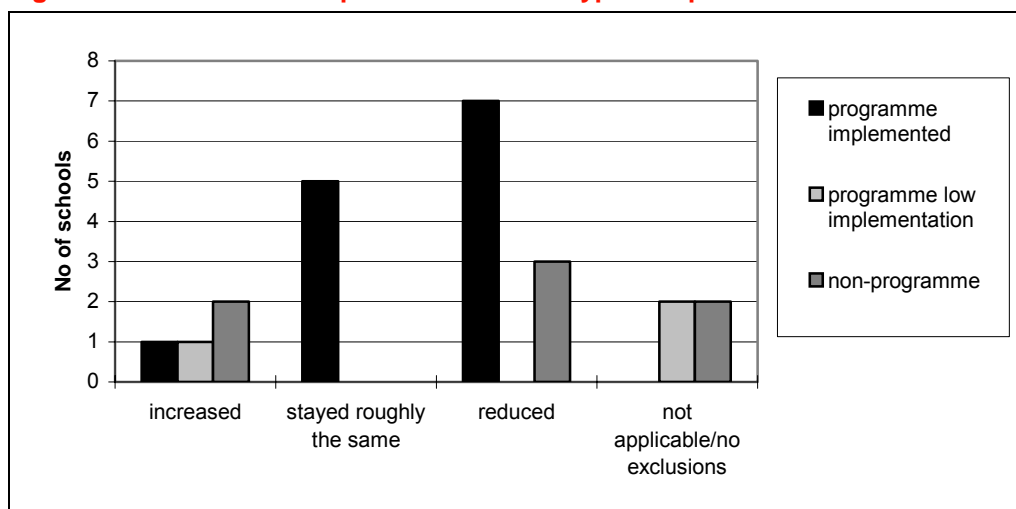
Similarly, of the nine non-programme schools, two schools increased the number of fixed-term exclusions by more than 10%; one school reduced the number of exclusions by between 10% and 20%; one reduced exclusions by more than 40%; one did not make any exclusions; and the number of exclusions remained constant in four schools.

Figure 5.2: The relationship between school type and fixed-term exclusions



However, Figure 5.3 shows a slight trend for schools implementing restorative justice to have reduced their permanent exclusions when compared to non-programme or low-programme implementing schools. However, the number of schools is too small to reach any definitive conclusions.

Figure 5.3: The relationship between school type and permanent exclusions



The findings from the school key data sets are somewhat strengthened by the positive comments about the effectiveness of restorative approaches on reducing school exclusions from the key stakeholder interviews. The following comments attest to its effectiveness.

It's taken the heat out of some major feuds between pupils and avoided exclusions.

(In-school restorative justice co-ordinator)

We have avoided fixed-term exclusions with all 14 of our conferences.

(Behaviour co-ordinator)

I see it as a civilising approach. It can help to keep the student in school. It leads to inclusion, not exclusion. I'd rather keep them in school. Exclusions are seen as a holiday. Long may it continue.

(Head of year)

Keeping kids in school is a major protective factor. When they are excluded they are more likely to cause trouble in the community and they end up in the criminal justice system. Restorative justice is a key approach to achieve this.

(Police officer)

Restorative justice keeps kids in schools and lets you continually challenge their behaviour. It also challenges parents to work with the school for the benefit of their child. Exclusion just makes things look less visible, as if the problem's gone away, until such time that a crime has been reported.

(Police officer)

It is difficult to link restorative justice directly to reduced exclusions. But it has certainly contributed to better overall behaviour management and had been promoted to pupils as an alternative to violence. It has definitely prevented conflicts from escalating, and has been used very effectively on return from exclusions.

(Head teacher, secondary school)

If staff think that restorative justice can be used to avoid exclusion it will be used.

(Deputy head, secondary school)

It works extremely well in getting pupils and parents together to discuss and resolve conflicts between pupils. It does cut down on the need to exclude.

(Head of house)

We have zero tolerance to verbal abuse of a teacher by a pupil, so exclusions have not gone down. But it has had an effect on the children that have been to conferences saying sorry. This has been a culture change, as we are now hearing more apologies from students that have not been involved in conferences.

(Head teacher, secondary school)

5.5 Other findings from the key stakeholder interviews

This section of the report highlights key findings from the qualitative interviews with a range of school and Yot/mediation service staff, as well as police officers, and builds on the findings already reported in chapter 4. These findings illustrate the importance of implementing restorative approaches through a whole-school approach.

5.5.1 Introducing restorative justice to the schools

School leadership

One of the single most important factors in the introduction of restorative approaches into schools is acceptance on the part of the head teacher. The influence of the head teacher on the school culture and ethos is paramount. If restorative approaches are introduced without their full commitment in both vision and practice, they will not be fully effective. This point was strongly reinforced by all the key stakeholders interviewed other than head teachers.

Some of the schools signed up without really understanding what was on offer, which obviously wasn't the best thing. The initial contacts were made with middle managers, as it was difficult to engage with head teachers – this did not help either. The success or failure of introducing these initiatives has much to do with the school ethos and their willpower to take on new things.

(Yot staff)

The views of the head teacher and deputy head responsible for behaviour is crucial.

(School restorative justice co-ordinator)

Head teachers also have the ultimate influence on how resources are deployed in the school. When restorative approaches are offered to a school, it is the school leadership that decides where the initiative will be located in terms of staff availability for training and co-ordination.

The more senior staff who we trained were able to use their status and influence to drive through policy changes needed in the schools to make them more restorative. It was much harder for the LSAs to make much of an impact outside their own classroom environments.

(Yot staff)

Changing the focus and priorities of the head teacher also affects the likelihood that the initiative will succeed.

Twelve months ago the school ownership was stronger. The head has his sights set on the next wave of initiatives, and restorative justice has moved down a gear.

(Yot staff)

Finally, changes in school leadership are likely to effect how the initiative will progress. In one of the Hammersmith and Fulham schools, a new head teacher introduced a regime of behaviour management on arriving in the school that placed greater emphasis on the use of fixed-term exclusions. This had a serious impact on the viability of one of the most established initiatives in the Restorative Justice in Schools programme.

Information and clarity as to what is being offered and the school's responsibility

Schools need clear information about what restorative justice is, how it will be implemented and by whom. They need to know what commitment and resources will be required from the school, and that effective implementation will require a whole-school approach (including time for training and INSET, integration into the behaviour policy, and a clear process for implementation).

If I were to start again, I'd set out the roles, responsibilities and expectations of both the Yot and the school in a formal signed agreement at the outset.

(Yot staff)

Experience and credibility of person introducing restorative approaches to the school

Finally, the experience and credibility of the person introducing restorative approaches into a school are vital; it can otherwise be difficult to be clear about the respective roles, responsibilities and expectations of the school and the agency introducing restorative approaches.

Staff appointed to lead restorative justice initiatives who had no experience of conferencing or mediation had an uphill battle to establish both their credibility and that of restorative approaches in some schools. This was particularly the case when the Yot staff's first exposure to restorative justice training was alongside staff from the schools with whom they would be working.

When I was recruited to the post, I was a teacher, although given the long service records of many teachers in the schools around here, some people would say that I was not an experienced teacher. Then I knew nothing about restorative justice before I did the training – this meant that I had a lot to do to establish my credibility with the school staff.

(Yot staff)

No, the school has not benefited from having restorative justice – perhaps because it hasn't been properly implemented here. The heads of year have no faith in [the Yot restorative justice] co-ordinator.

(Deputy head, secondary school)

Previous experience of working with schools, although not essential, was helpful in introducing restorative initiatives, as it demonstrated to school personnel some understanding of how schools work.

5.5.2 The importance of informing staff through INSET and other approaches to staff training

The provision of clear information about what restorative justice conferencing entails is not sufficient to effect a whole-school approach. INSET and other training opportunities are vital.

I feel so in the dark about it. The SENCO [Special Educational Needs co-ordinator] went on the training and then went off long-term sick. I don't know much about it.

(Deputy head, secondary school)

No-one on the staff really knows about this. Had I not been told by the deputy head, I wouldn't have known about it.

(Head of year)

All we got was a one-minute input at the end of a meeting.

(Yot staff)

Making time for INSET on restorative approaches has been the single biggest barrier to implementation. Only 8 of the 26 schools undertook any INSET, and 5 of these were primary schools (four Oxfordshire schools were provided with free one-day consultancy to run INSET and work with staff).

Finding time for INSET is more difficult in secondary schools, due to competing demands for time on valuable INSET days, and the programme is often set well in advance (sometimes the previous year), so it is understandable why most Yots found it so difficult to schedule time during INSET days for an initiative that had to be up and running within a three- to six-month period.

5.5.3 Integrating restorative justice into the school behaviour policy

Less than half of the programme schools (11 out of 26) had integrated restorative approaches into the school behaviour policy. Most of the schools that had integrated restorative approaches were still in the process of revising their behaviour policies, so it was not possible to ascertain the degree to which restorative justice had been integrated.

Thorough integration of any approach to behaviour improvement is essential if it is to be an effective whole-school approach. The positive results from the pupil survey of the Blackpool non-programme school suggests that any thoroughly implemented positive whole-school behaviour policy can be effective. Restorative justice is unlikely to be fully effective unless thoroughly implemented whole-school behaviour policies are in place and transmitted to staff through INSET.

5.5.4 Building links with the PSHE curriculum

Even fewer schools had made formal links between the PSHE curriculum and restorative practices (such as listening, empathy, being non-judgemental, and taking personal and civic responsibility). Only four schools had made this formal link, of which three were primary schools. Making formal connections with restorative justice and PSHE are essential if a whole-school approach is to be achieved.

They produced a PSHE curriculum incorporating restorative justice, and we now run circle time once a week.

(Head teacher, primary)

Restorative justice is a critical democratic principle giving people a voice and strategies that leaves them enhanced.

(Head teacher)

5.5.5 Who are best placed to implement restorative justice?

There is no standard answer as to what type of person is best placed to implement restorative justice practices, as the structures and cultures of schools vary enormously.

Working with a mixed bunch of schools has shown me that what works in one school won't necessarily work in another. Schools have their own agendas – they know where the need is.

(Yot staff)

But it is clear that restorative justice needs to be led from the top by someone with a vision about how restorative practices can add value to the school (see section 5.5.1).

In many respects, it is valuable to have a variety of different personnel trained in restorative approaches. Teaching staff can benefit from using restorative practices in their everyday classroom activities.

The Yot restorative justice co-ordinator came in to speak to all the staff and told them about the training that will be available. They all wanted to do the course. Every member of staff could see that restorative justice skills build on current practice.

(Assistant head, secondary school)

I've learned to listen in a different way – not just at school but across my personal life too.

(LSA, primary school)

Before the training, for years we had given lip service to circle time. Now we start each day with circle time. Some staff don't like it – sharing their thoughts and feelings with the children.

(Deputy head, primary school)

The training has helped us to develop emotional literacy in the school. Without this, it all would be a waste of time.

(Deputy head, primary school)

Even though we were doing this before, we are now more aware, more conscious.

(Head teacher, primary school)

We would like to develop restorative justice initiatives for lower level disputes and behaviour issues.

(Deputy head, secondary school)

However, running conferences is a time-consuming activity and can only realistically be offered by staff who are either external to the school (such as Yot staff, police, mediation service or volunteers), or school staff who have some time off from front-line teaching (such as learning mentors, heads of year and inclusion/counselling staff).

It's important for us to have someone who has the time to do it – who has this as their main role. It's so time-consuming. Without this post we couldn't do it. We take for granted the skills needed in setting up and managing the conferences. They only work because of the groundwork that is put in preparing the parents to come.

(Head of house)

I honestly think that it has completely failed because of the practicalities. I don't have the time. No-one in the school is pulling it altogether. It's energy wasted if it's not co-ordinated. But if there was someone on site with the time, it'd be magic.

(Head of year)

We are going to provide training to all the heads of years, who will be able to facilitate conferences with students outside of their year groups. This will provide them with some independence so they don't have to mix restorative justice and punishment.

(Yot staff)

The school was initially receptive but it was difficult to have staff released for training, as the time needed was too long, so the school remains dependent on us to run conferences for them. But I also think that the school wants conferences to be run by an outside agency.

(Yot staff)

More than half of the schools (14 out of 26) were dependent on outsiders (Yot staff, police, mediation service staff, volunteers) to run conferences. Some schools preferred the conferences to be run by outside staff. Staff at several schools were keen to have the police facilitate conferences where the incident was more serious; but one head teacher wanted all the conferences run by police officers and expressed some dissatisfaction that the Yot was bringing in volunteers to run some of the conferences. The police officers interviewed both thought that it was a positive thing for police officers to be involved in running conferences.

Although it would be good to have staff in school trained to do restorative justice, I think it is good for the student to have a fresh face from the outside, who doesn't have any preconceived ideas about that student. It's a completely new approach. An outsider brings a lot to the process.

(Head of year)

Having outsiders running it has been excellent.

(In-school restorative justice co-ordinator)

There is no substitute for having a police officer running the conference. It sends a clear message that if the young person doesn't take the opportunities on offer to change, they will be seeing a lot more of the police, but maybe in a different role.

(Head teacher, secondary school)

I think it gives us a great opportunity for young people to get to work with us so they can get to see us as human beings – as people – not just the law. I think it's building relationships between the police and young people, breaking down barriers, preconceptions...

(Police officer)

5.5.6 Should restorative justice be used to resolve pupil/teacher disputes?

Half the schools (13 out of 26) had used restorative conferences to resolve at least one dispute between a pupil and a teacher. Blackpool Yot only used them to resolve pupil-teacher disputes. Although the great majority of these cases went well, there were a few cases where the teacher involved felt threatened by the process.

We've only used restorative justice once for a pupil-teacher incident. It went very well. They both listened to each other. It was a good arena for this, as there was was no audience to grandstand to.

(Learning mentor)

One member of staff felt as though she was being put on trial.

(Learning mentor)

I found it a difficult experience. It felt like the pupil was using the situation for his own end. He'd requested it. Some things were said by the pupil that weren't true. It felt like I couldn't respond freely. It was poorly set up – it wasn't explained to me clearly before it happened. I was constrained by the structure. It wasn't constructive.

(Special Educational Needs teacher)

Staff generally will not support restorative justice in situations that affect them, like when they are sworn at. They prefer a more punitive approach.

(In-school restorative justice co-ordinator)

Staff who have long service records and those who favour authoritarian approaches find that restorative conferences challenge the order of things – the hierarchy between pupils and staff. Their view is that the school should always support the staff, regardless of the issues at hand.

Some staff feel uneasy about it [RJ]. They see it as handing power to young people, and as challenging their authority. In restorative justice, everyone is on the same level. It conflicts with their authoritarian approach.

(Learning mentor)

When teachers are involved, restorative justice should come down on the side of the teacher and the school policies.

(Special Educational Needs teacher)

I'd be very wary of asking any of my teachers to attend a conference. They'd think that I was siding with the pupil.

(Deputy head)

Although the numbers were small, it seemed that staff who have specialist roles in dealing with behaviour (supportive curriculum staff and special needs staff) also seemed to have a negative view of restorative approaches. They reported that restorative approaches were “nothing new”, or spoke about the dangers of allowing non-specialists to interfere with a specialist role. Some of these specialist staff also had a particular concern about the possible stigmatising effect of working with the police in a conference.

5.5.7 Following up the conferences

Only two of the schools had formal procedures in place to follow up the parties to conferences after they had taken place. Some staff thought that it was the evaluators' role to follow up participants, while others thought that informal approaches were sufficient.

When I know that someone has been in a conference, I will keep an eye on that person to make sure they are alright.

(Head of year)

Without proper, formal follow-up, it can be difficult to ascertain if the agreements made have been adhered to, so this is clearly an area that needs further work.

As a head of year, no feedback is of no value to me. We all need to follow up what has happened.

(Head of year)

5.5.8 Peer mediation

Although no empirical evidence was collected on peer mediation, there were many comments about the success of these schemes. Peer mediation was seen as freeing staff time from dealing with petty squabbles, providing more choices for pupils as to how and where to resolve their difficulties, and as a tool for increasing pupil responsibility.

The peer mediation has been really successful. We used to spend hours of our time dealing with pupils that had fallen out. Now they go to peer mediation. This is a time saver.

(Learning mentor)

Sometimes young people don't want their situations to be official – they'd rather the mediators sort it out than come to us.

(Learning mentor)

The school has benefited without question from peer mediation. It's another tool in the toolkit. It allows young people to have a voice and become more confident.

(Learning mentor)

5.5.9 Circle time

The Oxfordshire training was credited as having revived flagging and almost non-existent circle time in three of the schools, where it was now an integral feature.

Before the training, we had just given lip service to circle time. Now we start each day with circle time. Some staff don't like it – sharing their thoughts and feelings with the children.

(Deputy head, primary school)

Circle time was another useful tool in resolving sensitive and complex matters with young children.

We had one Year 5 boy who was a real nightmare. We gave him loads of support to help him. Then one day he was found dragging another child across the playground. We ran a healing circle, where everyone in the class had the chance to say something about the incident and to support both parties. It ended with the class applauding the boy. He's not been in any trouble since.

(Deputy Head, primary school)

Circle time is also seen as a tool of school-room democracy: listening, speaking, having their say.

Kids want to have their say. It's part of democracy.

(Police officer)

5.5.10 Is restorative justice effective?

With only three exceptions (all from the same school), all school staff interviewed believed that their school had benefited from having restorative justice approaches available to them.

The school has benefited in many ways. It's helping to change the culture, recognising that others have feelings, and saying sorry. Talking things through is not the way that people do things around here; it's not part of their upbringing at home. This is making a big difference.

(Head teacher)

Restorative justice was seen as a time-saver, a catalyst to culture change, and a strategy to enable staff to work in more productive ways. It allows children (and parents if involved) to be listened to and have a voice. If practiced well, in the right circumstances, it also produces mostly sustainable outcomes.

It has allowed me to step away from behaviour management issues.

(Head of year)

Restorative justice has freed up staff time from dealing with behaviour management.

(Head of inclusion)

Restorative justice is a real asset to the school. When everyone's together and dealing with the issues, it's very rare that the issue crops up again. It's pivotal that we have restorative justice.

(Learning mentor)

Restorative justice is very effective. It gets young people to look at what's happened and to see the effect their behaviour has had on other people – not just the victim, but their parents too. It also helps to identify any problems that the young people may have so that support can be put in place for them too.

(Yot staff)

The schools that we work with report that school vandalism is down from £120,000 to £30,000. Young people value the school more.

(Yot staff)

Restorative justice has helped to shift some of the pastoral staff away from punitive measures.

(Head teacher, secondary school)

Restorative justice has been a significant part of our move out from special measures.

(Head teacher, secondary school)

It was seen as offering new approaches to some longstanding, intractable problems.

It has helped to solve some very long-term intractable problems between pupils.

(Deputy head)

Having supporters in conferences makes a big difference, especially in cases that have gone on outside of the school gates, such as family feuds, long-term bullying, and fights with other schools.

(In-school restorative justice co-ordinator)

Restorative justice approaches can often look 'soft' and therefore ineffective. But, in many cases, once a person has had a successful experience of restorative justice, they begin to change their views as 'seeing is believing'.

Some staff think that restorative justice is a soft option.

(Head of year)

I was initially a sceptic, but I have been won over by what I have seen.

(Head of year)

I was initially sceptical about it, but now I have been involve in running conferences I think it is a good thing.

(Police officer)

You have to respect it because it works.

(Police officer)

But not all staff were convinced of the effectiveness of restorative justice.

The apologies sometimes feel shallow.

(Emotional and behavioural difficulties teacher)

I went on the two-day course, which was very intensive. But I was very sceptical. A lot of the heads of year are very experienced in dealing with bullying, so I wasn't convinced that it would make a difference. My biggest concern was the amount of time it takes. I could deal with six cases in a day. These sort of things need to be sorted out quickly.

(Head of year)

In fact, restorative approaches may look as if they are increasing the level of conflict in the school, as the number of pupils feeling confident to raise issues increases:

Restorative justice can sometimes make it look like there is an increase in bullying and violence, because the more you deal with it in a positive manner, the more likely pupils will come forward to report things.

(Police officer)

The children like the experience of being listened to – they love the drama of it all. Sometimes it means that they are less focused on trying to resolve things.

(LSA, primary school)

But restorative justice is not a panacea for all situations. It needs to be targeted at the right people, at the right time, by people with the right skills and within a whole-school approach for it to be maximally effective.

Restorative justice is a clear process in terms of a way to manage a meeting with a definitive outcome which all the parties are clear about. Students and parents have welcomed the clear agreements which result at the end of the conference.

(Head teacher, secondary school)

Staff running conferences must be skilled – they must be secure in what they're doing. They must feel safe.

(Police officer)

We deal with bullies every day – it needs to be dealt with on the spot. To leave it a week till someone from the Yot comes in is way too long.

(Head of year)

5.5.11 How does the effectiveness of restorative approaches compare with other approaches?

Interviewees found it difficult to place restorative justice in a hierarchy of effective approaches. It was thought to complement other behaviour improvement strategies. But restorative work was only thought to be useful if it was implemented effectively. Almost half those staff interviewed found it difficult to make this judgement, as it is important to choose the right strategy for the right situation. But, overall, restorative justice approaches were thought to be as effective as any other approach if used correctly.

Restorative justice is very effective in comparison with other initiatives, but only so long as you've got the structure, the quality, and the time in place to do it properly.

(Assistant head, secondary school)

It is difficult to compare the effectiveness of conferences with other approaches; but it is a useful tool to be used to complement other approaches. It increases our range of options available.

(Head of year)

The schools where restorative justice worked most effectively used a 'triage' approach in order to decide how the school should respond to a particular incident. Such schools had a structured daily meeting before the start of school where a core group of staff (usually senior managers or heads of year) reviewed all the behaviour incidents from the previous day and decided what intervention was the most appropriate response to the incident. Restorative conferences were one of the possible interventions to be applied.

5.5.12 Financial and policy implications

Senior managers in schools were asked what levels of resourcing would be necessary to sustain the project. The variations in costings needed to sustain the project varied widely (from £6,000 to £20,000 per year), to fund a proportion of a staff member's time to run conferences (learning mentors, counsellors, etc.). Others thought that only training costs needed to be provided (approximately £1,500 per annum). Other resources that were thought to be necessary included:

- funding to attend annual conferences in restorative justice
- increment points for in-school co-ordinators
- a permanent police presence in the school (like the Safer School Partnership).

Almost all of the schools had suitable accommodation in which to run the conferences.

There was general agreement that this initiative needs to be driven by the DfES in order to make it more relevant to the agenda of schools and education.

If we had to pay for it, we would have to decide against it due to competing resource priorities.

(Head teacher)

6 Case studies

6.1 Introduction

Six case studies are offered to illustrate the conference process and its range of outcomes. Names have been changed to protect pupils' identities.

6.2 The case studies

Case study 1: The fire alarm

Alan was caught setting off the fire alarm between lessons. A conference was held that included Alan, his mother, the local fire safety officer and a pupil who had previously set off the alarm. Alan felt very embarrassed about what he had done, especially in front of his mother. During the conference the fire officer had the opportunity to discuss the seriousness of what Alan had done. One focal point of the conference involved the fire officer showing a safety video. Alan's mother thought that "this was a good option – he was very remorseful. This way of doing things was far more likely to make Alan take notice of the seriousness of what he had done – more so than if he had simply had a telling off by school staff and punishment."

Case study 2: Family feud spills into school

A problem occurred between two families outside school. This led to friction at school between four children, Tom and Elaine, a brother and sister, and two other girls, Stacey and Rebecca. Rebecca had once been Elaine's best friend but, lately, Rebecca had been more friendly with Stacey and this upset Elaine. Threats and verbal insults were traded between the group, and Elaine felt that Stacey and Rebecca were ganging up against her and her brother because of the dispute between Elaine and Stacey's family.

Elaine asked for the meeting and a pre-conference meeting was held during which the four pupils said that they would like the situation resolved without their parents getting involved. Rebecca claimed that Elaine thought that she and Stacey were laughing about them and making fun of them, which wasn't true. They all listened intently to each other's accounts. "There were lots of things that Stacey and Rebecca said that I disagreed with and I kept wanting to interrupt, but I knew I wasn't allowed to," said Elaine. The facilitators reported that all of the parties were open and quite honest about their parts in the incident. An agreement to stop the name-calling was made and written down, and had largely been adhered to, by the pupils giving each other a wide berth. "Even if we did not sort things out completely, at least we talked. I can now concentrate on my studies more," said Elaine three weeks after the conference.

Case study 3: Paint damages a shirt

Adam had been repeatedly bullied by Kirsty, which took the form of hitting, kicking, calling names and being spat at. After an incident in an art class, where Kirsty put paint on Adam's shirt, Adam's mother withdrew him from school for two days and asked the school to intervene. A conference was held to resolve the matter. Before the meeting Adam was nervous: "I thought that Kirsty was going to shout at me and make up stories about me but she didn't." During the meeting, it emerged that Adam often behaved in a silly way, provoking Kirsty. The facilitator thought that both pupils acknowledged their roles in the dispute and took responsibility for their actions. Adam agreed not to be silly in class any more, and Kirsty agreed to stop her aggression. As a result of the conference, Adam reported that he felt much happier: "It did work because she's not picking on me anymore and I feel safer in school," said Adam.

Case study 4: Girl gangs

An incident occurred between two girl gangs from different schools when, following a death in one of the girl's family, one girl received a text message saying "Ha-ha, your brother's died!" The girls from one gang threatened to attack the girls in the other gang outside their school. One of the girls in the threatened gang asked a member of the school staff to intervene and asked for a conference (she had been party to another incident that had been resolved through a conference).

A conference was organised between some of the girls from the two schools. Five girls from each school attended. The girl who had received the text was not present at this conference. A number of relatively minor issues between the two groups were discussed in the conference, and all agreed to stay away from each other in future.

A further incident occurred between the two gangs when a girl from one gang barged another in a shopping centre, resulting in a further escalation of the threats. It was agreed to hold another conference. This time the girl who had received the text message attended. The facilitators skilfully handled the large group of girls in the conference. During the second conference it emerged that two of the girls had switched their gang allegiance and that one of the girls had a cousin who was being bullied by the girls in the other school. These events were the real source of the dispute. Feelings were aired, and those present agreed that it was good to be able to talk about what had happened and the problems that these incidents were causing all of them. It also emerged that other people in the gangs were stirring things up, and trying to keep the conflicts going.

After much talking, the girls again agreed to pay less attention to those stirring and to keep their distance. This time the agreement between the two gangs held.

Case study 5: A punch outside school

Michael punched Steven outside school on the last day of term, chasing him down the high street. Steven ran into a shop and the security guard stopped any further trouble. Steven's mother contacted the school and demanded that they take action against Michael. A conference was held on the same day (because it was the last day of term). Michael explained that a lot of his friends thought that Steven was behaving in an arrogant way, and Michael took it upon himself to confront Steven. During the conference, Steven asked why Michael had picked on him and wanted to understand why he hated him. Michael admitted that he had been wrong hitting Steven, especially because he did not have a good reason, having "totally misread the guy". Michael then found out that Steven was in the year below him and this made him feel guilty. He apologised and he agreed to make sure that neither he nor his friends bothered Steven again. Steven was scared before the meeting, but his fears were allayed when Michael told the truth and was apologetic. "I don't feel afraid anymore and now I know where to go if I am getting bullied," said Steven. Steven's mother was informed of the outcome of the meeting and she was very supportive and satisfied with what had taken place.

Case study 6: Swearing at a teacher

Simon was excluded for swearing at one of his teachers. A conference was held as part of the process of reintegrating Simon back into school. Simon's mother attended the conference as well as the teacher. During the conference Simon said that he felt that the teacher hated him and was always picking on him. He also admitted that he had sworn at the teacher to "look big" in front of his mates. The teacher explained that she did, in fact, like him and gave examples of when she had gone out of her way to help him.

Simon's mother asked him how he would feel if someone had called her the name that Simon had called his teacher. He admitted that he would be upset because it was an unpleasant thing to do. His mother then said that she was ashamed at his behaviour and expected better things from her son. Simon agreed that he should not have sworn and offered the teacher an apology. He was then asked to think of different ways he could have handled the situation, and he agreed to speak to the teacher privately at the end of the class if he felt that she was treating him unfairly.

7 Other key issues

7.1 Introduction

This chapter contains other key issues that have arisen during the research but have not fitted neatly in other sections.

7.2 Terminology

Restorative justice has developed in the criminal justice area, and its terminology is not always easily transferable to a school or educational setting. The word ‘justice’ does not sit well or make sense in every situation. Similarly, terms such as ‘victim’ and ‘offender’ may sometimes be cause problems: for example, those who cause harm to others are not always committing an offence. Restorative approaches aim to repair the harm experienced by the aggrieved person and the wider community (in this case, the school) and to work for the integration of all within the community, avoiding the labelling of individuals. Some thought might need to be given to what are the best terms to use within a school setting.

We don't use the word justice in the school. But 'fairness' is an important principle to our pupils and their parents. Justice equals fairness. We try to use everyday language.

(Deputy head, primary school)

Restorative justice is a bit of a mouthful, so we just call it RJ.

(Head teacher)

7.3 Issues for the police

The police officers interviewed had different views about whether it was best to wear uniforms or civilian clothes for conferences. More research might be undertaken to ascertain what works best and in what circumstances.

I felt that it was important to run conferences in my uniform. I am a policeman. Being out of uniform would be like trying to hide that. I can't record any negative experiences as a result, and it helped to build bridges between the young people and the police – that we are human too.

(Police officer)

The police interviewed also spoke about some of their colleagues berating them for working on a restorative project in school, as if the harm and damage done in school were not real or important.

At first my colleagues used to say that this wasn't proper police work, but, over time, other police came round to seeing that restorative justice can work.

(Police officer)

7.4 Inter-agency working

Implementing restorative conferences is an excellent vehicle for improving inter-agency working. During Restorative Justice in Schools, Yots worked more closely with schools, and police found a constructive role in which they could engage with young people. Connexions staff, school staff, mediation staff and volunteers worked together with varying degrees of success. Extended and community schools initiatives could prove to be an effective vehicle for increasing and formalising this inter-agency work with young people and school.

Restorative justice has been a good vehicle for extending links with the Yot, the police and [the local] mediation service.

(Head teacher, secondary school)

7.5 Making other agencies more restorative-focused

Restorative approaches in schools, delivered through inter-agency alliances, provide the opportunity for practitioners of a number of agencies to have successful exposure to restorative practices, and this may lead to increased restorative work in other settings.

Several of the Yot staff involved in this programme reported that, as a result of working in it, their Yots had become more confident and experienced and had increased the amount of restorative work undertaken in other areas (e.g. integration into Final Warnings and the development of family group conferencing).

The Yots and police helping to make other agencies more restorative-focused and less oriented towards a culture of name, blame and shame may be a useful, if unintended, outcome.

8 Conclusions, recommendations and best practice guidance

8.1 Conclusions

8.1.1 Overall conclusions

Restorative justice is not a panacea for the problems in schools but, if implemented correctly, it may be a useful resource that improves the school environment and enhances the learning and development of young people.

The pupil surveys showed no statistically significant effects on pupil attitudes across the study, but there were some important ‘within school’ improvements in the attitudes of pupils in the schools that had implemented restorative justice using a whole-school approach.

The staff surveys show that staff think that restorative approaches have helped to improve the school. The results are stronger for schools that have implemented restorative approaches using a whole-school approach. The interview data found that, with only a few exceptions, school staff believed that their school had benefited from having restorative justice approaches available.

Conferences had no discernible effect on exclusions, as they were used by many schools to reintegrate pupils following exclusions.

However, the vast majority of conferences (92%) resulted in successful agreements being made between the parties. This represents a very high rate of success, especially given that almost a quarter of these were classed as long-term disputes. There was a high degree of satisfaction among pupils that participated in restorative conferences (89%), and 93% reported that they thought the process was fair and that justice had been done. The fact that only 4% of agreements had been broken at the time of the three-month follow-up suggests that restorative conferences are an effective way of stopping the behaviour that was the cause of the conference.

The following sections aim to answer the questions that the research was seeking to address.

8.1.2 What are the levels of victimisation, bullying and robbery in the schools in the study?

The baseline pupil surveys showed that, overall, a fifth (21%) of pupils attending secondary schools in the programme and non-programme schools reported that they had been bullied by another pupil in the past month. There was much variation across schools. Levels of bullying were found to be higher in primary schools, with 35% of pupils reporting that they had been bullied in the past month in the baseline survey. These findings are consistent with other recent research.

Boys were twice as likely as girls to be involved in incidents featuring physical violence, while girls were three times more likely than boys to be involved in name-calling and gossip.

Only 2% of secondary school pupils reported that they had had things stolen from them. However, 7% said that they did not feel safe at school, and just under half (49%) of all school staff reported that behaviour had got worse in the past year. Only 14% reported that it had got better.

8.1.3 How are restorative justice approaches introduced to the schools?

A range of restorative interventions were implemented during the national programme, from training school staff to implement restorative practices (including active listening and restorative enquiry, circle time and mediation) and developing peer mediation, through to the undertaking of restorative justice conferences by school staff and outside agencies (including Yot staff, police and mediation service personnel).

One of the single most important factors in the introduction of restorative approaches into schools is acceptance on the part of the head teacher. The influence of the head teacher on the school culture and ethos is paramount. If restorative approaches are introduced without the head's full commitment, they will not be fully effective.

Schools need clear information about what restorative justice is, how it will be implemented and by whom. They need to know what commitment and resources will be required from the school, and that effective implementation will require a whole-school approach (which includes time for training and INSET, integration into the behaviour policy, and a clear process for implementation). Making time for INSET on restorative approaches has been the single biggest barrier to implementation. Only 8 of the 26 schools undertook any INSET, and five of these were primary schools.

Less than half of the programme schools had integrated restorative approaches into the school behaviour policy. Most of the schools that had done so were still in the process of revising their behaviour policies, so it was not possible to ascertain to what degree restorative justice had been integrated. Thorough integration of any approach to behaviour improvement is essential if it is to be an effective whole-school approach.

Even fewer schools had made formal links between the PSHE curriculum and restorative practices (such as listening, empathy, being non-judgemental and taking personal and civic responsibility).

Because the structures and cultures of schools vary enormously, there is no standard answer as to what type of person is best placed to implement restorative justice practices. But it is clear that it needs to be led from the top by someone with a vision of how restorative practices can add value to the school. In many respects, it is valuable to have a variety of different personnel trained in restorative approaches. Teaching staff can benefit from using restorative practices in their everyday classroom activities.

Finally, the experience and credibility of the person introducing restorative approaches into a school are vital. Without this, it can be difficult to have clarity about the respective roles, responsibilities and expectations of the school and the agency introducing restorative approaches. Staff appointed to lead restorative justice initiatives who had no experience of conferencing or mediation had an uphill battle to establish their own credibility, and that of the restorative approaches in the school. This was particularly the case when the Yot staff's first exposure to restorative justice training was alongside staff from the schools with whom they would be working. Although not essential, experience of working with schools, and so an understanding of how schools work, was helpful in establishing the credibility of staff introducing restorative initiatives.

One of the challenges in the Restorative Justice in Schools programme was the definition of what counted as a conference. Each area sourced their initial training from a variety of training providers and, as such, different areas counted different things as conferences. Some areas used the concepts of a short or informal conference (which were not recorded in the monitoring), others long or formal conferences (which were recorded for monitoring purposes). Some used a formal scripted approach, while others used a rather more open-ended model that followed a framework or structure without a script.

Less than a fifth (19%) of conferences involved parents as parties to the conference. Parents were routinely involved in conferences in a sixth of the schools, and a further third of schools involved parents in more serious incidents. Telephone calls were the most frequently used means of engaging parents, but home visits were made by Yot staff in three schools as a way of engaging the parents.

Half the schools had used restorative conferences to resolve at least one dispute between a pupil and a teacher, and only one Yot used them to resolve pupil-teacher disputes. Although the great majority of these cases went well, there were a few cases where the teacher involved felt threatened by the process. Staff with long service records who favoured authoritarian approaches found that restorative conferences challenged the hierarchy of pupils and staff; their view was that the school always needed to support the staff, regardless of the issues at hand.

Only two of the schools had formal procedures in place to follow up the parties to conferences after they had taken place. Some staff thought that it was the evaluators' role to follow up participants, while others thought that informal approaches were sufficient. Without formal follow-up, it can be difficult to ascertain if the agreements made have been adhered to, so this is clearly an area that needs further work.

However, running conferences is a time-consuming activity and can only realistically be offered by staff who are either external to the school (such as Yot staff, police, mediation service or volunteers), or school staff who have some time off from front-line teaching (such as learning mentors, heads of year and inclusion/counselling staff).

More than half the schools were dependent on outsiders (Yot staff, police, mediation service staff, volunteers) to run conferences. Some schools preferred the conferences to be run by outside staff. Staff at several schools were keen to have the police facilitate conferences where the incident was more serious; but one head teacher wanted all the conferences run by police officers and expressed some dissatisfaction that the Yot was bringing in volunteers to run some of the conferences. The two police officers interviewed both thought that it was a positive thing for police officers to be involved in running conferences.

8.1.4 To what extent are participants in restorative justice conferences (victims and offenders) satisfied with the process at the time of the conference?

The vast majority of conferences (92%) resulted in successful agreements being made between the parties. These ranged from apologies, repaired friendships/relationships, agreements to desist from the behaviour that had led to the conference and agreements to maintain distance between the parties, through to formal reparation. Only 6% of conferences failed to reach a satisfactory agreement. A further 2% had not reached a final agreement at the time of reporting, with a follow-up conference planned. There were no underlying trends in either the demographic features of participants or the types of incident that failed to reach an agreement.

Pupils reported high levels of satisfaction with the process of participating in conferences, with 89% of pupils reporting that they were satisfied with the outcome of the conferences and 93% that they thought that the process was fair and that justice had been done. Having an opportunity to be listened to and heard was the most important part of the process.

8.1.5 To what extent do the conferences show short-term and long-term effects on the participants' experience of victimisation, robbery and bullying?

Only 4% of agreements had been broken three months later. There is evidence that restorative approaches helped perpetrators gain a better understanding of the full effects of their actions, and take responsibility for them. There is also evidence that restorative approaches helped increase the confidence of victims, and that they were better able to speak about their victimisation, seek help, and stop any unnecessary behaviour that was increasing their victimisation.

Restorative justice was seen as a time-saver by some staff, a catalyst to culture change, and a strategy to enable staff to work in more productive ways. It allowed children (and parents if involved) to be listened to and have a voice. It was seen as offering new approaches to some longstanding, intractable problems.

8.1.6 Do conferences and other restorative justice approaches have wider effects on the nature and frequency of acts of victimisation in the schools involved in the project?

Overall, there were no statistically significant differences in attitudes or levels of victimisation between the baseline and follow-up surveys according to whether a school was programme or non-programme.

The programme schools, as a whole, showed more improvement in the attitudes of pupils than the non-programme schools, but these were not significant.

These results may not be surprising, given the short length of time between the baseline and follow-up surveys. Furthermore, the exposure of pupils to conferences was fairly low in all but a few schools.

Results were stronger in the schools that had longer to implement restorative justice. The results of the pupil surveys were stronger still in Lambeth, compared to Hammersmith and Fulham. This was partly due to the fact that the implementation of restorative justice had been variable in Hammersmith and Fulham, following changes in leadership in one of the programme schools (where a preference for punishment and exclusion undermined the programme for several months), and because staff morale at the other programme school dropped dramatically when the school was put under special measures.

But the results from the teachers' survey showed much stronger results in the programme schools compared to the non-programme schools. There had been a significant improvement in pupil behaviour in the programme schools, while behaviour had declined in the non-programme schools. Of staff in programme schools, 6% reported that pupil behaviour had improved since the introduction of restorative approaches (statistically significant $p < 0.05$), while there was a 5% decrease in staff in non-programme schools who reported that pupil behaviour had improved. There was a 9% reduction of staff in programme schools who said that pupil behaviour had worsened between the two surveys, while there was an increase of 12% of staff at non-programme schools who reported this.

Results from the non-programme schools, however, lend support to the thesis that any thoroughly implemented positive whole-school behaviour policy is likely to be effective.

With only three exceptions (all from the same school), school staff interviewed believed that their school had benefited from having restorative justice approaches available.

Restorative justice approaches can often look 'soft' and, therefore, ineffective. Although not all staff are convinced of the effectiveness of restorative justice, in many cases, once a person has had a successful experience of restorative justice, they begin to change their views – 'seeing is believing'.

No empirical evidence was collected on peer mediation, but there were many comments about the success of these schemes. Peer mediation was seen as freeing staff time from dealing with petty squabbles, while providing a tool for increasing pupil responsibility and more choices for pupils as to how and where to resolve difficulties.

Circle time was another useful tool in resolving sensitive and complex matters with young children. Circle time is also seen as a tool of schoolroom democracy, with pupils listening, speaking and having their say.

8.1.7 Are restorative justice conferences a useful tool in reducing school exclusions?

It is difficult to ascertain exactly the impact of restorative justice practices on schools using exclusion data, as exclusions are affected by a number of variables. First, schools have developed a number of strategies to reduce their exclusion figures. Second, none of the primary schools and three of the four Welsh schools in the study had not made any fixed-term exclusions during the period for which the key data were collected. Third, there were multiple interventions in all schools to improve behaviour and to reduce exclusions, making it impossible to tease out the effect that restorative justice had on this. Finally, school exclusion rates are also subject to changes in school leadership and in behaviour policies.

Twelve of the programme schools in the study used restorative justice in some way in relation to exclusions, either to prevent exclusions or to reintegrate pupils who had been excluded for a fixed-term on their re-entry to school. Eight of the schools regularly used restorative conferences to try to avert an exclusion, while nine used conferences as a reintegration tool following exclusion.

There was a slight trend for schools implementing restorative justice to reduce their permanent exclusions when compared to non-programme or low-programme implementing schools. However, the number of schools was too small to reach definitive conclusions.

Given these variables, it may be that restorative justice conferences can have an impact on reducing the length of fixed-term exclusions (pupils are excluded for fewer days), but such measurements of fixed-term exclusions were not used in this study, and so cannot be verified.

8.2 Recommendations

Since the Restorative Justice in Schools pilot programme came to an end in April 2004, there is little value in making specific recommendations for the programme. However, there are six general recommendations for the further development of restorative approaches in schools. Furthermore, section 8.3 offers a best practice guide for implementing these approaches.

Recommendation 1: Involvement of the DfES

There was general agreement that this initiative needs to be driven by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) in order to make it more relevant to the agenda of schools and education. The DfES needs to play a greater role in promoting restorative justice in schools if the practice is to become wider and deeper.

Recommendation 2: A whole-school approach should be used if a school is to implement restorative approaches

Implementing restorative approaches requires leadership and vision, integration into the school behaviour policy, and staff training. Unless there is a commitment to adopting such a whole-school approach, schools might do better to place their efforts elsewhere; halfway measures are unlikely to be effective.

Recommendation 3: Develop a clear definition for restorative conferences

A clear definition needs to be developed that clearly articulates what makes a restorative conference different from other forms of intervention. The definition of a restorative conference might be as follows: 'A facilitated meeting with parties to the conflict – including family members, peers and others who have a significant relationship to the parties – which seeks to encourage the perpetrator(s) to accept responsibility and find ways to repair the harm caused'. A facilitated meeting without the presence of those who have a significant relationship is a restorative mediation.

Recommendation 4: Formal follow-up procedures should be put in place

Formal follow-up procedures are necessary to monitor compliance with agreements made in conferences.

Recommendation 5: Making the terminology more education-friendly

Restorative justice has developed in the criminal justice area and its terminology is not always easily transferable into a school or educational setting. The word ‘justice’ does not always sit well or make sense in schools. Similarly, terms such as ‘victim’ and ‘offender’ may sometimes be problematic.

Some thought is needed over what are the best terms to use within a school setting to make it more appropriate to educational culture. Use of the term ‘restorative conference’ may be more appropriate than ‘restorative justice conference’.

Recommendation 6: Inter-agency working

Implementing restorative conferences is an excellent vehicle for improving inter-agency working. During Restorative Justice in Schools, Yots worked more closely with schools, and police found a constructive role in which to engage with young people; Connexions staff, school and mediation staff and volunteers were also enabled to work together, with varying degrees of success. Extended and community schools initiatives could be effective vehicles for increasing and formalising this type of inter-agency work with young people and schools.

8.3 Best-practice guide for implementing restorative justice approaches in schools

This section outlines best practice from the study (developed from observing both what has worked and the gaps during the research). The focus of this best practice is on the development and embedding of restorative conferences and other approaches into schools. Appendix 5 provides a checklist for best practice.

School leadership

■ **Vision**

The school senior management needs to have the vision that it wants to implement and develop restorative approaches into its school, based on a clear understanding of what restorative justice is and commitment to the principles of restorative justice. This may involve changing the culture of the school from a punitive culture. Without such a vision, it will be difficult to develop and embed restorative principles into the school’s policy and practice.

■ **Whole-school approach**

There needs to be a commitment to implement restorative approaches throughout the school, including integration into the school’s behaviour management policy, and staff INSET and other training. Locating where restorative interventions should sit within the behaviour management process is crucial.

■ **Building relationships (within and external to the school)**

School senior management needs to be clear on where they can seek the expertise to develop restorative approaches and techniques and how they want restorative interventions to be delivered. This may be from an outside agency (such as the local Yot or mediation service), from a multi-agency partnership or within the school staff team. Once identified, relationships need to be developed to implement the vision.

Information for teachers

- **INSET**

All staff in the school need to be clear about what restorative approaches are available, how to access and refer to the interventions, and what to expect from the process.

- **Notice board in staff room**

A notice board in the staff room can be a useful place to communicate with staff in order to keep them up to date about the development and implementation of restorative approaches.

- **Access to other training opportunities**

Some staff may wish to undertake more training in using restorative techniques and conducting interventions such as conferences. Opportunities need to be made for such staff to have access to this type of training.

Information for pupils and parents

- **Written information**

Schools need to communicate to parents and pupils about the restorative interventions on offer in the school so that they are familiar with the concepts should they need to request restorative interventions themselves, or participate at the request of another party.

- **Newsletters**

The school newsletter can also be used as a communication tool to remind parents and pupils of, and update them on, the presence and progress of restorative interventions in the school.

Range of approaches

- **Choice of what to offer and when**

There needs to be a range of restorative approaches available in the school (conferences, circle time, mediation, peer mediation) with clear guidance as to what intervention is suitable in what situations.

- **Driven by pupil, parent and teacher choice**

The range of approaches used should be informed by pupil, parent and teacher choices of what interventions are acceptable and available in the school. Pupils, parents and teachers should be able to request a particular intervention if they think that it will help to resolve a problem in the school.

Clear agreements about contributions and expectations between the schools and the agencies introducing restorative justice approaches

The development of restorative approaches needs to be based on clear agreements as to what schools can expect to be delivered by and offered from the agency introducing restorative approaches to the school, as well as what commitments that agency will need from the school.

Integration of restorative justice approaches into the school behaviour policy

The integration of restorative approaches into schools needs to include:

- clear procedures for conducting restorative interventions
- clear processes for referral

- a triage system that decides what is the best intervention for the situation.

Formal links between PSHE and citizenship

There need to be clear links between the school's PSHE and citizenship curriculum and restorative approaches (such as listening, empathy, non-judgemental approach, personal and civic responsibility). This will ensure a firm foundation in the school on which a restorative culture can be built, and enable pupils to be prepared to participate more effectively in restorative interventions and processes.

Preparation for conferences

Conferences require adequate preparation in order to be effective. This involves having contact before the conference with all who will be involved to explain the process. Time needs to be set aside to do this; failure to do so may result in ineffective conferences.

Structure for the conferences

Conference facilitators need adequate training and preparation to conduct conferences. The training should involve having a prepared script or a loose framework, depending on the skills and confidence of the facilitator.

Range of facilitators

A range of well-trained facilitators need to be available to facilitate conferences based on the needs of the situation, including:

- trained school staff
- a neutral person (this can especially help in pupil-teacher conflicts)
- police in the most serious cases
- joint training/inter-agency opportunities/extended schools
- good relations between the school and facilitators
- support for staff delivering restorative conferences, as they can be stressful.

Swift response

Conferences need to be as soon after the incident as it is possible to gather together the participants (including supporters and parents).

Engaging parents

Mechanisms to ensure parental involvement in conferences need to be developed, including home-school liaison (by phone calls or home visits), and a focus on keeping parents informed and involved.

Monitoring and formal feedback

Mechanisms need to be put in place to ensure that the agreements made in conferences will be adhered to. This may involve:

- having written agreements of the outcomes of the conferences

- clearly defined checking procedures to ensure that there is compliance with agreements made.

Exit strategies

There needs to be a clear idea of how the initiative will develop, become integrated and sustainable beyond the initial development of the intervention.

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Appendix 1 Pupil survey (secondary school version)

School code:

Confidential – do not write your name on this

Please put a cross in the boxes, like this



1 Please write your age _____

2 Are you . . .
a girl

a boy

3 Choose one section from A to E, then **X** the appropriate box to indicate your cultural background.

A White

British Irish Any other White background

B Mixed

- White & Black Caribbean White & Black African

- White & Asian Any other Mixed background

C Asian or Asian British

- Indian Pakistani Bangladeshi

- Any other Asian background

D Black or Black British

- Caribbean African
- Any other Black background

E Chinese or other ethnic group

Chinese Any other

4 Have you ever been permanently excluded from any school?

yes no

5 Have you been excluded from this school in the last month?

yes no

6 Have you bunked off any lessons or any whole days in the last month because of bullying?

yes no

7 How safe do you feel when . . .

	very safe	OK	not safe
you are at this school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
you are on your way to or from school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
you are at home	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

8 Do you think these things are bullying?

	yes	no
. . . hitting or kicking someone, trying to hurt them?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
. . . stealing something without them knowing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
. . . taking something from them by threatening or hitting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
. . . threatening someone by saying something to them	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
. . . threatening someone with a weapon	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
. . . spreading nasty rumours about someone	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
. . . calling someone racist names	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
. . . trying to turn other students against someone	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

9 In the past month, how many times has any other student . . .

	never	once or twice	a lot
. . . hit or kicked you, trying to hurt you	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
. . . stolen something from you without you knowing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
. . . taken something from you by threatening or hitting you	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
. . . threatened you by something they said	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
. . . threatened you with a weapon	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
. . . spread nasty rumours about you	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
. . . called you racist names	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
. . . tried to turn other students against you	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

10 In the past month have you been bullied by another student?

no yes

11 In the past month, have you told a teacher or another adult at school that you were being bullied?

no yes

12 In the past month, have you told a teacher or another adult at school that someone else was being bullied?

no yes

13 In the past month, have you bullied another student?

no yes

14 In the past month, have you done any of these things to another student . . .

	never	once or twice	a lot
. . . hit or kicked them, trying to hurt them	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
. . . stolen something from them without them knowing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
. . . taken something from them by threatening or hitting them	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
. . . threatened them by something you said	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
. . . threatened them with a weapon	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
. . . spread nasty rumours about them	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
. . . called them racist names	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
. . . tried to turn other students against them	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

15 From your own point of view, would you say...

	yes	no
this school does a good job at stopping bullying.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
bullying is a serious problem at this school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
bullying can be prevented.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
bullies should be punished by the school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
the only way to stop a bully is to fight back.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
if someone gets bullied, it is because they are weak.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
to be a leader you have got to be a bully.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
telling a teacher about being bullied is grassing.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Appendix 2 School staff survey

The Youth Justice Board of England and Wales have funded a series of pilot projects to assess the effectiveness of restorative justice in schools. Your school is taking part in this initiative.

The initiative is being independently evaluated by Partners in Evaluation. As part of the evaluation research we would be grateful if you would complete this short staff survey. It will take you less than 5 minutes to complete and will be completely confidential. Please place this form in the attached Freepost envelope and seal it once you have answered the questions.

About yourself

1 Which of the following categories most closely matches your position in the school?

- teacher senior manager learning support
 lunch-time supervisor other support staff

2 How many years have you worked at the school? 3 Are you male
or female ?

About pupils' behaviour

3 In general, how would you rate the behaviour of most of the students most of the time?

- well behaved quite well behaved behaviour varies
 not well behaved badly behaved

5 Over the last year would you say that pupil behaviour

- has improved has remained the same has got worse

6 In the last month, how many times has a pupil been rude to you or has sworn at you?

7 In the last month, how many times has a pupil used inappropriate body language towards you?

About the school's behaviour policy

8 Are you clear about the school's behaviour policy?

- very clear quite clear not very clear not at all clear

9 When a problem arises do you think that the school has adequate strategies for dealing with the problem?

- very adequate quite adequate not very adequate not at all adequate

10 Have you attended an INSET session on the school behaviour policy in the last 12 months?

- yes no not sure

11 How effective are fixed-term exclusions in dealing with behaviour problems?

- very effective quite effective not very effective not at all effective

- 12 How effective are permanent exclusions in dealing with behaviour problems?
 very effective quite effective not very effective not at all effective
- 13 Do you agree or disagree that exclusions are the best way to deal with behaviour problems?
 strongly agree agree disagree strongly disagree
- 14 How much would you say that you know about restorative justice?
 nothing not very much a little quite a lot
↓

Please briefly describe the key features of restorative justice

About working at the school

- 15 Do you agree or disagree with the statement that *this school is a good place to work?*
 strongly agree agree disagree strongly disagree
- 16 Do you agree or disagree with the statement that *this school is a safe environment?*
 strongly agree agree disagree strongly disagree
- 17 Are you planning to stay at this school for the next 2 years?
 yes no not sure

Finally, the following two questions are for teaching staff only

- 17 On average, what percentage of your teaching time would you say is lost in dealing with behaviour problems during lesson time?
- 18 How many times have you had to send a pupil out of class in the last month?

Thank you for your time in completing this survey. Please return this questionnaire in the attached Freepost envelope to Partners in Evaluation, Freepost LON 15660, London SE1 7YZ

Appendix 3 Post-conference interview schedule for perpetrators and aggrieved

Introduction:

- interviewer's name
- young person's name
- about PiE
- about the interviews – to get young people's views
- discuss the confidentiality scale

Borough
School
Case
Date

1 What was the incident that led up to the group conference or meeting?
(*probe to explore underlying causes*)

2 Who do you think was responsible for starting this incident?

you other both someone else

3 How did you feel about coming to the group meeting?
(*Prompt: was it your choice to come? Were you asked to come or told to come?*)

4 Who else was at the meeting?

5 What happened at the start of the meeting? (*How did the facilitators start the meeting off?*)

Offer the laminated pictures and say: "I'm going to ask you about how you felt at different stages of the meeting. You can use your own words, or if you can relate to the feelings shown by the words or any of the pictures please point them out to me."

6 How did you feel at the start of the meeting when the facilitators introduced everyone and said what was going to happen?

7 Who spoke first, after the introduction? And then who spoke, in what order?

8 Do you remember what the other person said?

- 9 How did you feel when the other person was telling their version of what had happened?
- 10 Did you get to put your account of the story across?
- 11 How did you feel when you were telling your version of what happened?
- 12 Do you think that the other person was really listening to you? *(if appropriate)]*
- 13 What was it like to have other people in the room?
- 14 How did you feel when the other people spoke? (friends, family etc)
- 15 Do you feel you were treated fairly at the meeting? Why is that?
(Prompts: were your ideas properly listened to by everybody? How did the other people treat you? Interviewer to mention them.)
- 16 Was anything sorted out by the meeting? What? Why? Is it completely sorted, or do you think that things will continue in a bad way after this meeting? *(Prompts: What did you want or expect from the meeting? Did you think you would get it? And did you get what you wanted?)*
- 17 Did you make an agreement in the meeting? If so, what was it? And did the other person make an agreement, and if so, what was it? On a scale of 1 to 10, how likely do you think it is that you will stick to what was agreed in the meeting? Has this agreement been carried out so far?
- 18 Thinking of **NOW**. Do you feel any different than before about what you did that caused this meeting to happen? Why is that?

- 19 Who do you feel was responsible for making the situation right/better?
- 20 How do you feel about coming into contact with the other person again?
- 21 Do you think that these meetings are a good idea? Why is that?
- 22 As a result of the meeting do you think that you are less likely or more likely to get into the same situation again with the same person? Or will it stay the same? Or might you get into a similar situation with someone else? Why is that?
- 23 Would you encourage other young people in a similar situation to yours to use a group meeting to sort things out?

Thanks for your help. We would like to speak to you again in a few weeks to see how things are going on in the longer term. Would that be OK?

Yes

No

Interviewer's perception of who started incident:

this YP

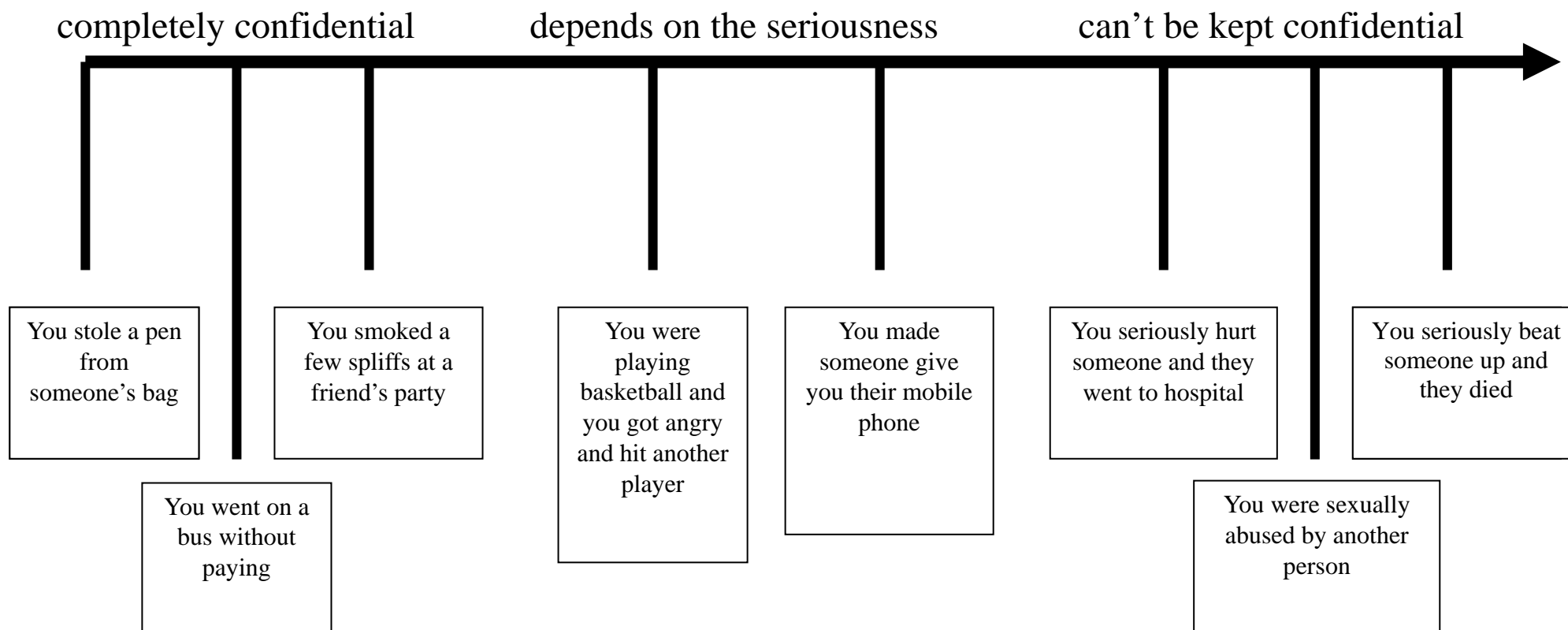
other YP

both

someone else

Comments

Appendix 4 Confidentiality scale



By using these examples, we are not saying that any of these actions are acceptable behaviour.
These examples are used to show what types of things that we can keep confidential and which things we must report.
If you do not wish us to report a serious offence, please do not tell us, and we will not have to report it.

Appendix 5 Best-practice checklist

School leadership

- vision
- whole school approach
- building relationships (within and external to the school)

Information for teachers

- INSET
- notice board in staff room
- access to other training opportunities

Information to pupils and parents

- written information
- include in newsletters

Range of approaches

- choice about what to offer and when (conferences, circle time, mediation, peer mediation)
- driven by pupil, parent and teacher choice

Clear agreements about contributions and expectations between the schools and the agencies introducing restorative justice approaches

- what schools can expect to be delivered and offered from the agency introducing restorative approaches to the school
- what commitments the agency introducing restorative approaches into the school will need from the school

Integration of restorative justice approaches into the school behaviour policy

- clear procedures
- clear processes for referral
- triage system that decides what is the best intervention for the situation (which one/s is/are most likely to work)

Formal links between PSHE and citizenship

Preparation for conferences

- time
- contact with all who will be involved prior to the conference

Structure for the conferences

- script or a loose framework, depending on the skills and confidence of the facilitator

Range of facilitators

- well-trained facilitators
- trained school staff
- neutral person can help in pupil teacher conflicts
- police in most serious cases
- joint training/ interagency opportunities/ extended schools
- good relations between the school and facilitators
- support for staff delivering RJ conferences

Swift response

- conferences need to be as timely as possible after the incident
- involvement of supporters and parents in conferences

Engaging parents

- home-school liaison (phone calls and/or home visits)
- keep parents informed and involved

Monitoring and formal feedback

- written agreements
- clearly defined checking back procedures

Exit strategies

- clear idea of how the initiative will develop, become integrated and sustainable beyond the initial development of the intervention