



Approved:	13/09/2011
Reviewed:	September 2014
Next Review:	September 2016
Audience:	All Staff & Students

## **POLICY NAME: Relational Support Policy**

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### **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the right of students and staff at Peace Lutheran Primary School to work in an environment free from disruptions, abuse or threat and within which they can reach their potential as teachers and learners.

### **Scope**

This policy applies to behaviour within the school grounds and classroom, when representing the school in public and on camps and school excursions

### **Responsibility**

Principal

### **Point of Contact**

Deputy Principal

### **Background**

Definition of Restorative Practices:

- Restorative Practices involves the development and enhancement of relationships and social competencies.
- Restorative Practices stresses the importance of relationships and seeks to restore these relationships when they have been damaged.
- It encourages children and staff to
  1. Understand the choices they make and the impact they have on others
  2. Take responsibility for their behaviour
  3. Repair any damage and/or harm

Students of all ages need leadership and guidance as they learn to work and play together at school. Helping each student to develop positive attitudes and practise acceptable behaviour patterns in the school is an important part of our school curriculum. For Peace School, the model of excellence reveals the right human attitudes and behaviour towards God and fellow beings.

As born sinners we do not naturally know the right Christian behaviour and attitudes, it is something that is taught and caught as modelled by others. Staff will present the Christian lifestyle through instruction and example. This will be done in a loving and caring environment in the school in order to reinforce Christian values and to encourage positive attitudes and behaviour.

The term stakeholders used in this document refers to students, parents and caregivers, teachers, teacher aides, pastoral carers and administration staff.

## Principles

Our Relational Support Policy at Peace is underpinned by the following principles:

- The basis of any action in a Christian School must be framed on Christ himself and underpinned by the word of God
- In the eyes of God, all people have worth.
- Building successful relationships within our school community is an essential foundation to a restorative approach
- The first line of disciplinary action in a Christian environment is positive reinforcement and we recognise that, for most students, our aims will be achieved by this means alone.
- In any disciplinary matter, the rights and needs of the individual are balanced against the rights and needs of the school community.
- All staff and students have the right to feel safe and secure within the school community and to be able to work to their potential free from disruptions, abuse or threat.
- Each student is an individual and is to be valued for their individuality, including that of race, gender, cultural, physical or intellectual diversity.
- Students make choices that influence what happens to themselves and their community
- Each individual is responsible for their own behaviour
- Teacher reactions to misbehaviour should be instructive with the aim of changing behaviour
- Wrongdoing is a violation of people and/or property rather than the violation of rules.

It is the aim of the whole school community to explicitly teach, model and actively promote appropriate behaviour in our school.

### At Peace we aim:

- To encourage students to learn from their mistakes, reconcile and resolve problems.
- To recognise and manage the underlying causes of behaviour.
- To maximize the educational opportunities and outcomes for all students
- For staff to facilitate a repair process using restorative language
- To maintain healthy relationships within the school community
- To support the development of a positive learning environment within the classroom as well as a happy and safe playground.

The staff at Peace Lutheran Primary work as a team in all areas, including relational support. Teachers, the Principal and Pastor consult each other on matters of relational support and parents are informed as the need arises.

## Restorative Practices Implementation

### In the classroom:

#### *The classroom teacher will:*

- Set clear expectations for classroom and playground interactions and relationships and establish positive and negative consequences.
- Create positive relationships between students and teachers through 'circle time'
- Implement the schools Values program and discussions that enhance the personal and social competencies of children
- Display general school expectations in each classroom
- Use restorative language, (what has happened, what were you thinking, who have you affected, what can we do to fix things up) where appropriate, when addressing the choices children make.
- Be responsible for tracking an individual child's classroom actions and record on an individual support file in the Informal Student Incident folder.
- Contact parents when necessary.

- Refer students needing to reflect on an inappropriate interactions or actions to the reflection room and if possible liaise with the Deputy Principal to be in attendance at lunch breaks to monitor and work through the reflection sheets.
- Set up any necessary Individual Support Plans for children who have difficulty in showing positive changes to their behaviour.
- Direct any children on Individual Support Plans to the RP Coordinator or Principal and inform other teachers as necessary.
- Discuss any children involved in incidences that require more time with the RP Coordinator or the Principal who can make themselves available to give teachers release time to allow more follow up time.
- Liaise with the Restorative Practices Coordinator and refer children for further support.

#### **In the playground:**

##### ***The Playground duty Teacher will:***

- Use restorative language, where appropriate, when addressing the choices children make.
- Refer students needing time to reflect on an inappropriate behaviour to the Deputy Principal who will provide supervision and guidance for the student to complete a reflection sheet or provide release for the teacher on duty to supervise.
- Direct any children who are unable to work restoratively or involved in incidences that are serious, or require more time, to the RP Coordinator or Principal immediately.
- Direct any children on Individual Support Plans to the RP Coordinator or Principal as necessary.

##### ***The Deputy Principal/Restorative Practices Coordinator will:***

- give release time for the teacher to supervise. students needing to reflect on an inappropriate behaviour choice or action or provide this supervision at lunch times.
- Work through more in-depth incidences as required, allowing for more detailed information gathering.
- In consultation with the classroom teacher and Principal, decide when a child's behaviour needs to be supported differently. with an Individual Support Plan
- Support teachers to set up any necessary Individual Support Plans
- Monitor students on Individual Support Plans
- Meet regularly with teachers and Principal to discuss progress, needs and concerns.
- Facilitate conferences when appropriate.
- Be called on after teachers have undertaken their classroom support plan and the actions or interactions continue.
- Be called for cases when the teacher deems the actions serious and requires extra support. The Deputy Principal may either work with the students or give release time to the teacher to work with them.
- Support teachers when designing Individual Support plans.
- Monitor children's individual file.
- Meet with children who have had ongoing problems on a regular basis or provide release time for teachers to meet with them.
- Inform parents of children's ongoing negative interactions and refer to the Principal if behaviour continues.
- Refer children to the Principal for further consequences if the Individual Support plans have little or no impact on student actions or if the actions require suspension.
- Refer children to the Principal if the actions relate to student protection.

## **Restorative Practice at Different Levels**

***Restorative Practices may look different in different sections of the school, recognising the ongoing developmental changes of children.***

### **Restorative Practices Prep, Year 1 and 2**

Restorative Practices in the Early Years of children's school life recognises that children's cognitive abilities are still developing. It also recognises:

- Children at this age tend to be more egocentric
- Children at this age are more inclined to listen to adults than their peers
- Remorse, empathy and reasoning skills are still developing

Restorative Practices therefore requires a modified approach that requires more telling and explicit teaching. Children need to be guided through this stage of self-centeredness so they are able to think more consciously how their behaviour affects others.

**The Restorative Intervention at this level focuses on :**

1. Information gathering – the stakeholders understanding the problem (not just investigating the issue, dealing with the hurt and how to move forward)
2. The staff member giving a simple telling without judgement, focusing on the one social value or behaviour the child/ren need to understand.
3. Repairing the harm with teacher support

***Restorative Practices in Year 3 and 4***

Many of children’s developing cognitive skills are now established and most children at this stage are **consolidating**

- Reasoning skills
- Empathy and remorse
- An understanding of how their behaviour affects others.

During this stage there is a shift from the adult being the most important person in a child’s life to peers playing a more significant role. This allows for a sense of family to be developed within the classroom so that behaviour can be supported and rejected within this community. This is a transitional stage where children often go from having adults controlling behaviour to children controlling their own behaviour.

**The Restorative Intervention at this level focuses on:**

1. Information gathering – the stakeholders understanding the problem (not just investigating the issue, dealing with the hurt and how to move forward)
2. The choices that were made.
3. The effect these choices have on others.
4. What needs to happen for the damage to be repaired?

***The staff member aims to be a facilitator, but as this is a transitional phase interventions will still require some telling.***

***Restorative Practices in Year 5 and 6***

Most children’s cognitive skills required in working restoratively are now **established** and most children at this stage:

- Are able to reason
- Have a sense of empathy and remorse
- Understand how their behaviour affects others

It is expected that children of this age are able to work restoratively and are able to participate successfully in the various restorative conferences. Children who are unable to participate in the restorative process may be referred to the Principal or the Education Support Teacher for further support outside the school.

**The Restorative Intervention at this level focuses on:**

1. Information gathering – the stakeholders understanding the problem (not just investigating the issue, dealing with the hurt and how to move forward)
2. The choices that were made.
3. The effect these choices have on others.
4. What needs to happen for the damage to be repaired?

*The staff member aims to be a facilitator*

**Skills Children Require To Work Restoratively**

**At Peace we believe children require the following skills to successfully participate in restorative conferences at the highest level.**

- An ability to name and understand emotions such as
  - ❖ Anger
  - ❖ Sadness
  - ❖ Happiness
  - ❖ Jealousy
  - ❖ Annoyance
  - ❖ Frustration
- An ability to work with others through
  - ❖ Listening
  - ❖ Communicating
  - ❖ Cooperating
  - ❖ Negotiating (fight fairly)
  - ❖ Empathising
  - ❖ Self-soothing
- Responsible decision making
- Objectivity
- An understanding that all actions have consequences
- Empathy

***The staff at Peace Lutheran Primary recognise that these skills are continually developing in our children and that we are able to support this development through facilitating restorative conferences.  
(adapted from Hamilton North Primary School Restorative Management Policy)***

## **Developing an Individual Support Plan**

### **When Children Can't Work Restoratively At Their Level**

Despite the best of attempts there are times when a child does not respond to the restorative approach of conferencing problems and continues to exhibit inappropriate behaviour at school. A decision is then made, with consultation between the Deputy, the classroom teacher and the Principal, to manage this child's behaviour differently through the structure of an individual support plan.

When the decision has been made that a child's behaviour is to be supported differently, the Restorative Practice Coordinator begins planning the development of the ISP. This planning, in consultation with relevant parties, may benefit from including the following considerations:

- The skills the child needs to work restoratively, with consideration to their stage of development.
- The negative choices that need to be addressed
- Some ideas of why we are seeing these negative choices – empathy and understanding for the child's individual needs, possible referral to a Doctor for consultation at this point
- How the child's needs can be met in a positive way
- Saying to the child:

***"\_\_\_\_\_ at the moment it appears your choices have not changed and I feel we are spending too much time on this problem. Therefore the consequences are that we are going to support your choices differently by putting you on an Individual Support Plan. This plan is a way of helping you make an improved effort to make positive choices. First I'm going to need to contact your mum and/or dad to arrange a meeting, as we will need their help. For now you are going to need to spend your lunchtime away from your peers until we can arrange a suitable time to meet".***

When the planning of the school's response has been completed the development of the Individual Support Plan is then developed with the student, parents, teachers and Deputy Principal along with the inclusion of significant others which may include the Education Support Teacher. A consultative meeting will be held – the meeting and the development of the Individual Support Plan will address the following issues:

- The negative choices that have led up to the decision for the child's behaviour to be supported differently
- The specific negative choices that need to be addressed
- Strategies that will be implemented to support the child at home and school
- The consequences of not making positive choices in this area at school (to include that while the student is being supported differently through the Individual Support Plan they are to be excluded from school excursions, sporting activities off site and camps)
- Emphasises that the individual has a choice – to follow or not follow the agreement.

***(adapted from Hamilton North Primary School Relational Management Policy)***

## **Related Policies**

Anti Harassment and Bullying Policy

Child Protection Policy