



## Restorative Justice

Restorative Justice is a process that puts repairing harm done to relationships and people over and above assigning blame and dispensing punishment. It shifts the emphasis from managing behaviour to focussing on building, nurturing and repairing relationships.

### Restorative approaches:

1. Build mutually respectful relationships
2. Raise morale and self esteem
3. Increase emotional literacy

It is important that fitting punishment, sanctions and consequences are a part of any response to inappropriate behaviour. In the blame culture, the response is given or 'imposed', whereas the relational approach offered by RJ, it ensures that consequences are given in a context that have meaning and relevance for all concerned. We believe that this response is far more likely to foster responsibility and to change behaviour.

### The Five RJ questions

1. **What happened?**
2. **What were you thinking about at the time? And since?**
3. **Who has been affected by what you did?**
4. **What do you think needs to happen to make things right?**
5. **How is this going to happen?**

### No such thing as a 'naughty' child

Children can often behave inappropriately due to unmet needs and a lack of self-esteem. It is therefore important not to perpetuate their lack of self-worth by labelling the student as lazy, mean, careless, stupid etc; if we separate the behaviour from the student and simply label their behaviour or attitude as disappointing, disrespectful, unkind, unacceptable etc. it can be a much more positive way of having them learn from their mistakes.

Restorative processes enable everyone affected by conflict to play a part in repairing the harm and finding a positive way forward.