

Restorative Practices special edition

First let me start by introducing myself, my name is Maxine Fox and I am Head of Pupil Development and Wellbeing here at Sarum Academy.



I have worked in secondary schools for the last 16 years of my career and I am an experienced restorative practitioner which has enabled me to introduce restorative practices into several different secondary schools including Sarum Academy.



You might of seen in the news last weekend the physical and homophobic assault, a hate crime for his sexuality, on the retired Welsh rugby player Gareth Thomas by a 16 year old on a night out. Rather than pursuing a criminal offence Mr Thomas opted for a restorative meeting with the man involved.

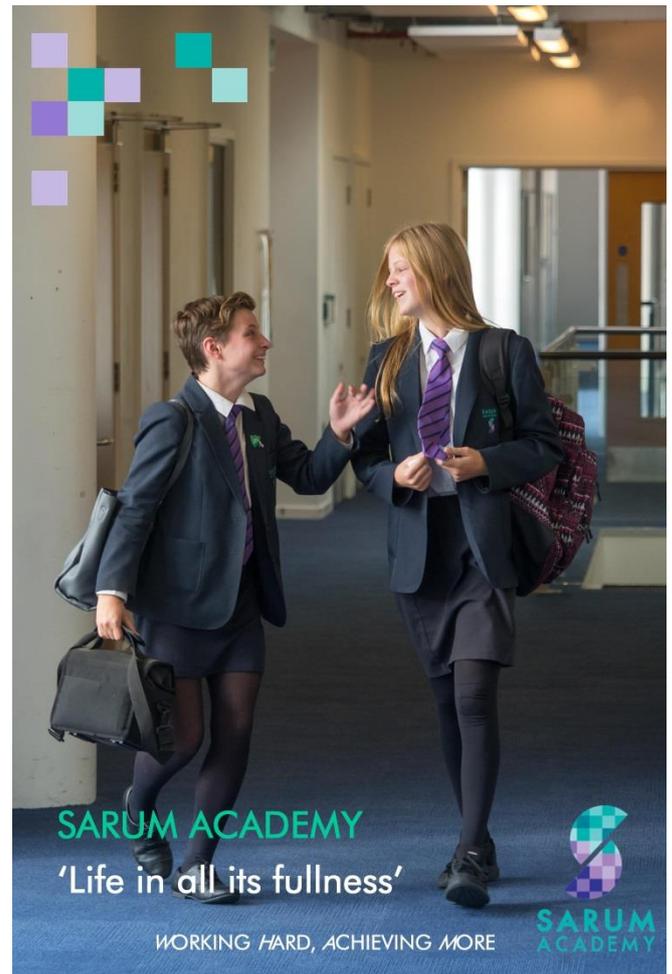
What is Restorative practices (RP)?

Restorative practices is not a new concept, it has existed in many countries and various organisations since the early 1970's. It was slowly introduced into schools in the early 1990's. It is solution-focused and, using a restorative approach and restorative language, it helps those

involved to learn how to change. Using these opportunities for personal development is a powerful means of self-improvement. The model also promotes healthy relationships, develops social and emotional understanding and enhances the thinking skills pupils need both academically and socially.

The power of positive relationships

As a restorative school we embrace the importance of relationships for supporting emotional wellbeing, resolving conflict and preventing harm.



Restorative approaches at Sarum Academy are based on four key features:

- Respect - *for everyone by listening to opinions and learning to value them.*
- Responsibility - *taking responsibility for your own actions and learning to make the right choice.*
- Repair - *developing the skills to identify solutions to repair harm.*

- Reintegration - *using a structured, supportive process that resolves the issues and ensures behaviours are not repeated.*

Putting things right: how a restorative approach works

The restorative approach requires all staff and pupils to be aware of the principles of the restorative process, and have the ability to apply them in resolving situations in their classes and around school. In the first instance this is by using common restorative questions:

What happened?

What were you thinking at the time?

What do you think now?

Who has been affected by this and how?

What needs to happen to put things right?

Sarum Academy in the community

Due to the success of restorative practices at Sarum Academy we have become members of the Wiltshire Restorative Together Board which promotes the importance of restorative practices in schools and wider settings. Through this work a group of pupils at Sarum Academy have received training in Restorative Practices. The group have now become **Restorative Ambassadors** for the school.



Sarum Academy was asked to demonstrate the effectiveness of RP during Restorative Justice week in November 2017. The RP Ambassadors delivered an assembly to Angus Macphearson, the Police and Crime Commissioner for Wiltshire and to Inger Lowater, the Restorative Justice Coordinator for Wiltshire.



The assembly was a huge success and the Police and Crime Commissioner was keen for our message to be heard by other schools. So he asked if we would present our work at the Restorative Together Annual Conference.

The Conference was held at Trowbridge Cricket ground and attended by more than a 100 people from various organisations, including other schools, Wiltshire Police and Fire Service, the justice system and the Restorative Justice Council.



The pupils delivered an amazing presentation on restorative practices and talked about their experiences in running their own restorative meetings when conflict happens. They took part in workshops and added valuable insight into how RP has helped them develop.



More recently the RP Ambassadors have delivered morning briefings to each year group to promote Anti-Bullying Week and the importance of respecting each other.



“Being a Restorative Practice Ambassador is a big responsibility, it requires a lot of patience which surprisingly I have discovered I actually have.”

Year 9 Pupil

“As a group we think seriously about what goes on around us and we help people with things they feel they can’t deal with themselves, from small things such as a day old disagreement with a friend to a big argument that has lasted a few weeks. We do this by providing an opportunity for a restorative meeting. We talk to each person separately at first to get their views. Then we bring them together to talk about what has happened and how we can put things right. The other pupils have all said they really like the idea of having young ambassadors as they feel that they can talk to us easier than they can an adult sometimes.”

Year 11 Pupil

“It helps me to make the right choices and creates better relationships in the school community.”

Year 10 Pupil

“It has really helped me build my confidence and create better bonds with other pupils and staff.”

Year 8 Pupil



Restorative Practice Ambassadors – What the pupils tell us



“It bonds, seals and repairs relationships.”

Year 11 Pupil

“Restorative practices is integral to our schools moral stability.”

Year 11 Pupil

“It really helps us to respect others thoughts and opinions.”

Year 9 Pupil

What do the staff think of Restorative Practices?

“I am much more aware of how I approach situations and the language that I use when initially starting a conversation with a pupil. I have found that asking pupils to reflect back on what has led to the situation is extremely powerful and it often diffuses the situation allowing a more reflective conversation, often with solutions identified by the pupil.”

“Restorative practice means that we talk things through; we develop skills to reflect and see how we could have prevented it. It allows pupils to self-regulate their friendships and to resolve conflict without adult intervention. It provides pupils with the skills to manage everyday situations which will make them well rounded adults.”

“It has helped me to improve my relationship with the pupils which has then benefitted my lessons. Relationships are key and I feel that I have to deal with a lot less behaviour incidents because of this. As a Head of Year the RPA group have helped to resolve social issues that would usually overspill into something more serious.”

“It has helped everyone gain the ability to resolve issues cooperatively and maturely.”

Should you want more information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Mrs Fox
Head of Pupil Development and Wellbeing
Sarum Academy



Thanks for supporting Anti-Bullying Week 2018.
A hugely positive week.

Christmas Shoe Box Appeal 2018

They have all been dispatched.

