

CHILDREN & FAMILIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2022

Meeting Date:	26 th May, 2022
Report Title	Restorative Practice Update
Purpose of Report:	Further to CFSOC meeting of 13.1.22, where the committee were provided with a summary overview of the longitudinal position with regard to permanent exclusions from schools in the county, the committee requested an update report on the progress of the Restorative Practice project. This report provides that update – For Information
Author	Molly MCleod – Restorative Practice Service Lead
Context:	<p>In 2016 the Vulnerable Children’s Partnership board were looking for a practice model to be used across all agencies in Gloucestershire.</p> <p>Research was conducted into various models and Restorative Practice (RP) was chosen because of its successful implementation in other local authorities. Namely:</p> <p>Leeds – Child Protection plans reduced by 50%; a ‘good’ Ofsted outcome for the LA; improved outcomes for children and young people across the city.</p> <p>Hull – Schools reporting reduced exclusions, increased attainment, improved community cohesion. RP Schools rated ‘outstanding.’</p> <p>Wokingham – Increased attendance, attainment, reduced exclusions, reduction in offending; over 40% of adults entering employment (many for the first time in three generations)</p> <p>West Berkshire – Increased community resilience, Tier four mental health placements avoided, reduction in children on Child Protection Plans.</p> <p>In June 2016 Gloucestershire implemented seven RP pilots across Children’s Services including two schools: Moat Primary Academy and Tewkesbury Secondary School. Early evaluative data from these school pilots was positive and broadly reflected national outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tewkesbury Secondary School reduced their suspensions by 54% in the first year and their attendance increased by 1.3%. • Moat Primary School reduced their suspensions by 82% in the first year and increased overall attendance by 1.5%.



	<p>Gloucestershire was the fourth highest excluding county in the UK in 2016/2017 with 141 permanent exclusions.</p> <p>Following the success of the pilots, the Director of Education began a 5-year investment plan to roll out RP across more Schools.</p>
<p>Report:</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">1. What is Restorative Practice in Schools?</p> <p>Restorative Practice is a way to be rather than a process to follow or a thing to do at certain times. It is a term used to describe principles, behaviours and approaches which build and maintain healthy relationships and a sense of community. It can also resolve difficulties and repair harm where there has been conflict. It is a way of being with people, essentially to work with and alongside others to create sustainable change.</p> <p>The implementation of Restorative Practice has been proven to have benefits at multiple levels in schools. On a practical level, Restorative Practice provides a structured and consistent response to the inevitable incidents of conflict that arise in the life of a school. Improved conflict resolution in school leads to reduced disruption of teaching and learning, better relationships, and a calmer school environment.</p> <p>In addition to the conflict resolution benefits, Restorative Practice has been shown to develop people’s social and emotional competencies, such as increased empathy, improved self-discipline, and more responsible decision-making. These benefits contribute to pupils and staffs’ personal, social, and moral development. Better relationships and improved communication also lead to fewer absences and a reduction in exclusion and an increase in wellbeing and engagement in school life in general for both staff and pupils.</p> <p>1.1 The Gloucestershire Model</p> <p>In Gloucestershire we offer a whole school approach to Restorative Practice for staff, pupils, and the wider school community.</p> <p>Initially, staff and pupils are trained and supported to think and respond differently to behaviour and incidents of conflict as well as identifying opportunities to build stronger relationships across the school.</p> <p>An important part of the implementation process is the introduction of practice learning circles, where staff and pupils can reflect on their experiences in a safe and structured way.</p> <p>As well as training and implementation support, it is also important to reflect on the school’s systems to identify elements that support or challenge the potential success of a restorative approach.</p> <p>1.2 Exempla Case Study:</p>

One lunchtime in October 2018, four Year 9 pupils started a fire in the toilets at their school. They faced potential criminal charges of 'arson with intent to endanger life' and permanent exclusion as pupils and staff were onsite at the time of the fire.

A multi-agency restorative approach was taken, and the pupils were offered an assessment of need. Three out of four pupils were found to have undiagnosed SEN with more than four ACEs. One pupil was reintegrated back into school and the other three were offered managed moves with a Family Group Conference to aid a successful transition.

All the pupils undertook a successful Restorative Justice intervention with the school through the Children's First Panel. As a result, no criminal charges were brought, and all four pupils obtained their GCSEs in 2020.

This incident's multi-agency approach informed the Team Around the School (TAS) initiative, which later developed to become the Team Around the Locality Cluster (TALC).

2. Action on ACEs

In November 2018, the first Action on ACEs conference was held in Gloucestershire. The message for the conference was 'Resilience Trumps ACEs.' As Restorative Practice focuses on building positive relationships and improving resilience, it became clear that there was an interdependent relationship between ACEs and Restorative Practice.

In 2019, the Education Subgroup of the ACEs panel supported the creation of 'Trauma Informed Relational Practice' (TIRP) integrating RP, ACEs and Trauma Informed approaches.

3. Key Learning:

Restorative Practice is much more than a tool to manage behaviour and reduce exclusion; it is a whole school approach to culture change. It takes time, commitment, and tenacity to embed successfully, and requires a trauma informed lens to understand it fully. Research shows that this creates [nurturing, inclusive schools](#).

As an ethos, RP needs to be role modelled from the top and delivered across the entire school community. To have maximum impact, this needs to include the wider education system.

As a result of this learning, Gloucestershire have replicated the schools' offer for all staff within the Education Hub at GCC as well as with other professionals who interact with schools and the HR and OD teams in GCC.

4. Impact to date in Schools:

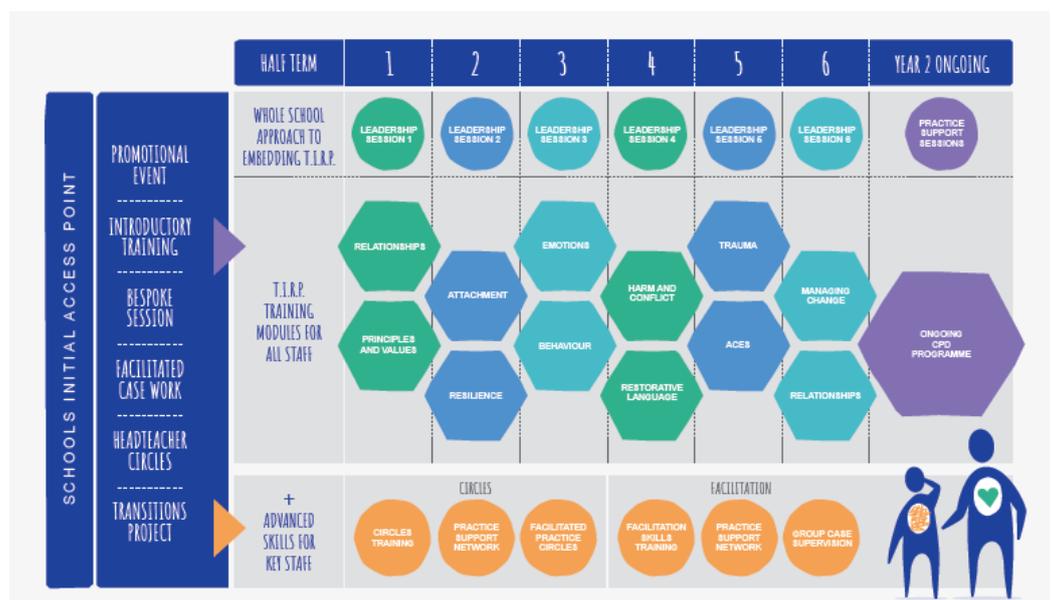
- 1000+ school staff have been trained in Restorative Practice in the county
- 70+ Schools across Gloucestershire have engaged in a Restorative Approach
- Thirty-four schools have adopted a Whole School Approach to Restorative Practice

- Eighteen headteachers are currently on a 2-year Restorative Leadership programme
- 80 senior staff attended the Restorative Circles programme during lockdown
- 100+ at risk Year 6 pupils attended a transitions programme across 14 schools

5. Current School Offer:

The current offer is an immersive 2-year model, working with and not doing to or for schools. RP needs to be consistently role modelled.

To 'do' Restorative Practice is fairly easy but to 'be' Restorative is often hard and takes time.



6. Impact in GCC to date:

- 400+ staff across Education and GCC have been trained in Restorative Practice
- 14 GCC leaders have completed an 18 month Restorative Leadership programme
- 11 GCC leaders are currently participating in an RP implementation programme
- Four service areas across the Education Hub are adopting a Restorative approach
- The GCC Grievance Policy now includes Restorative Practice interventions
- HR are piloting several Restorative Practice initiatives across the organisation
- Family Group Conference team now offer Restorative Practice conversations

7. Summary – Restorative Practice Across Gloucestershire

Restorative approaches are becoming more prevalent across the partnership. The GCC team work closely with Restorative

Gloucestershire, Children's First, Schoolbeat and the University of Gloucestershire to promote a common vision for Restorative Practice in the county.

Restorative Practice is a priority within various strategies including the ACES strategy, the Inclusion Strategy and wider Education Strategy, Child-Friendly Gloucestershire, and Family Hubs.

This system wide approach shows benefits across the workforce in terms of [wellbeing and productivity](#).

8. GCC Involvement in the National Picture:

- GCC have co-created a National network of RP Education practitioners with 100+ participants across 24 UK local authorities
- Trauma Informed Relational Practice is leading the field of RP practice in the UK
- The RESTORE framework for schools, which GCC has contributed towards, has been downloaded 30,000+ times internationally
- GCC continue to inform many UK research studies into best practice for RP, including funding a PhD to evaluate the effectiveness of GCC's implementation model.

9. Next Steps in Schools:

- There are 10 Schools signed up to the next RP Leadership programme in September and the team hope some of the current RP leaders will mentor the new cohort
- The team are setting up locality School RP Networks to share resources, ideas, and best practice
- The team hope to be able to strengthen the offer for vulnerable Year 6 pupils, promoting a positive transition to secondary school with the aim of reducing their risk of exclusion in Year 7.

Next Steps in GCC:

- Due to changes in leadership within Education, the team would like to run another RP Leadership programme for leaders in Children's services
- The team are mapping the RP practice champions network across the county to increase capacity to deliver high quality training and interventions
- The team are creating a Practice Framework for TIRP in Schools and the wider partnership to be able to benchmark good practice and offer staff ongoing quality CPD development opportunities

10. Next Steps in Gloucestershire

- The team are developing a training offer for parents to support the implementation of Family Hubs
- The team are developing a TIRP Train the Trainer programme to improve consistency of practice across the partnership, not just within Schools
- The team hope to raise the profile of TIRP within the broader Child-

Friendly Gloucestershire vision

11. Broader Next Steps:

- To continue to build the LA network, creating a shared RP community and resources website
- To work with the Restorative Justice Council to create specific Education standards for TIRP
- To contribute to the next phase of RESTORE with a new RESET framework for Schools
- To take up further opportunities to promote the model for TIRP via international links such as Creative Education and the RJ world conference

12. Key Priority/Risks:

- Over the last 5 years, the team have created a network of relational and inclusive primary schools, but few secondary schools have converted. There is a risk of exacerbating the disparities between the school phases, putting vulnerable pupils at risk, if there is not more investment in more secondary schools adopting a Trauma-Informed, Relational approach.
- The current funding allocation for RP is spent on five core staff and ends in 2024.