



**INSPIRE**  
Connected Communities Trust

# Relationships Policy



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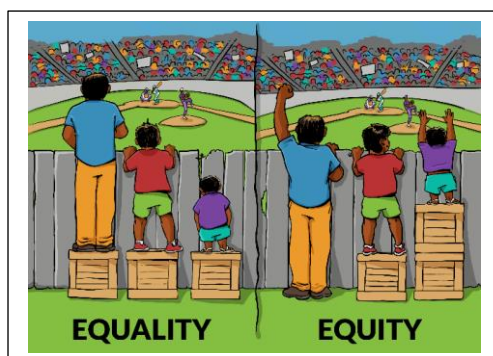
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**'READY, RESPECT, SAFE'**

**"Schools that believe children should get what they deserve respond to poor behaviour differently to schools that believe children should get what they need"**

Paul Dix, 'When the adults change, everything changes' (2017)

We believe that **Connection**, **Communication** and **Community** are important anchor points in our practice, these work together to enable our students to feel safe, valued, and secure. We will take a strengths-based approach and work holistically to develop student's resilience and independence. Strong relationships between staff and students are central to our work. We have high expectations of our entire community and offer equal support and challenge to develop and maintain this. Staff must be fair and adopt an approach of <sup>1</sup>'flexible consistency' in support of students. Being 'Fair' is not about everyone getting the same (Equality) but about everyone getting what they need (Equity).



We work to meet students at their point of need. We will take a 'whole child' view of any behaviour, remaining aware of the impact of trauma, attachment and adverse childhood events (ACEs). We expect our Staff to be approachable and there to offer support and redirection around choices where necessary, through restorative practice.

If a member of staff is finding challenge with an individual or group of students, they are expected to seek support in order to make a positive change. Asking for help is a sign of professional strength and developing practice at greater depth.

This policy is developed to ensure guidance for staff (and information for parents and governors) in order to promote a safe and respectful school environment. As a community we aim to promote positive mental health for every member of our staff and student body. We pursue this aim using whole school approaches as well as specialised and targeted aimed at vulnerable students. The procedures and guidance in this document provide a consistent approach across the schools and enables students, parents and staff to understand our approaches to the support of behaviour in school. We remain mindful that flexibility around this policy is required to meet our students at their point of need, given the range of social, emotional, learning or other needs. 'Flexible consistency' is important. Staff are encouraged to engage in a 'One Team Approach' discussion with the leadership team at their school for guidance around this.

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<sup>1</sup> Whitaker, D. (2021) *The Kindness Principle* Independent Thinking Press, Crown Buildings, Bancyfelin, Carmarthen, Wales.



**Consistency** is about our behaviour and approach as adults. Consistently using the same behaviour and responses as adults. Consistently building relationships and developing trust. Consistently being fair. It is not about how consistently we apply a procedure.

'A truly sustainable, consistent approach does not come in a tool kit of strategies but through the cohesive approach from every member of staff. The key is to develop the consistency that is part of every interaction of behaviour. Where learners feel treated as valued individuals, they respect adults and are more willing to work with them'. (Dix, 2019)

**The intent of this policy is ...**

### **To provide simple, practical procedures for staff and students**

- To provide a safe, welcoming, respectful learning environment which encourages each individual to achieve their own potential, through inspiring, purposeful and personalised learning. We celebrate learning in all forms.
- To enable students to regulate feelings and behaviour through providing them with strategies to manage this, whilst promoting self-esteem.
- To enable staff to support students safely with behaviour that challenges, through a relevant personalised approach.
- To maintain a calm and purposeful working atmosphere.
- To consciously work with the concepts of Community, Connection, and Communication to create an environment where all students and adults have a sense of belonging, feeling safe, respected and valued.

### **The Nature of Positive Behaviour Support**

A student's behaviour is an effective form of communicating that something is not right for them. It is an expression of their feelings. In our schools we remain mindful that 'all behaviour is communication' and we ask, 'what is the student trying to communicate?'

We will see behaviour that challenges us, as a learning opportunity and differentiate our approach as required to suit the learning style of the individual, much the same as we would do with academic learning.

Our positive behaviour support is about meeting our students at their point of need, maintaining dignity, protecting relationships and promoting self-esteem. We do this through working from a non-abusive psychological and physical intervention approach (NAPPI) and restorative practice.

This policy links directly to the PBS paperwork that is informed by our training ([www.nappiuk.com](http://www.nappiuk.com)). **Through this we have consciously moved to relational practice that is on purpose, by design and in keeping with our values as an organisation.** We recognise that at times we may need to intervene physically to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the student, others within the school community or to protect the fabric of the building from serious damage which could cause a risk.

All physical interventions will be carried out by specifically trained staff and are recorded using the incident recording system (CPOMS) Parents/carers will always be informed of any physical intervention. Staff will always reflect on their practice and on the positive support



plan for that individual. Students will always be offered an opportunity to debrief as part of our restorative practice. Any physical intervention will be the last resort after de-escalation and diffusion options have been exhausted. Staff with the strongest relationships will be in the position to support with any intervention and only after training, with agreed risk assessments. Each student will have a Positive behaviour support plan which details how to recognise and support with increased levels of distress with appropriate strategies, risk assessments and scripted interventions, where required.

## Consequences

We work with natural consequences e.g., if you are hurting others, we need to keep you and them safe.

We will not impose arbitrary consequences onto students for poor behaviour instead we will work to meet need and repair harm through restorative practice. Whatever we choose to do it needs to be about working towards 'changing a behaviour, restoring a relationship or fixing a problem and it needs to link logically to the initial incident' (Whitaker, 2021).

We will look for the 'Logical response' which will be reasonable, fair and necessary. Working in this way allows a logical response to a conflict incident which is fair and delivered with a restorative emphasis, so that relationships remain intact.

## All Adults will:

- Meet and greet students into the learning space.
- Refer to 'Ready, Respect, Safe'
- Model consistent appropriate behaviour and relational skills at all times - ask for help if you need it.
- <sup>3</sup>Connect before correction - Students may struggle to engage without an emotional connection (Golding, 2015).
- Be calm and give "take up time" when going through the steps.
- Teach learning behaviours - we don't know what we don't know.
- Consistently show **unconditional positive regard** - Unconditional Positive Regard is defined by humanistic psychologists to mean expressing empathy, support and acceptance to someone, regardless of what they say or do. Every day is a new day.
- Use positive reinforcement (catch them being good)
- Script difficult conversations (this links to PBS support)
- Invest in personal, restorative follow up.
- Work in partnership with parents and other professionals.
- Record any incidents in a timely and accurate way using Behaviour Watch.

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<sup>2</sup>Whitaker, D. (2021) *The Kindness Principle* Independent Thinking Press, Crown Buildings, Bancyfelin, Carmarthen, Wales.

<sup>3</sup> Kim S. Golding, Connection Before Correction; Supporting Parents to Meet the Challenges of Parenting Children who have been Traumatized within their Early Parenting Environments, *Children Australia*, 40 (2) (2015): 152-159.



## **The Leadership Team will:**

The leadership team are not expected to deal with behaviour incidents in isolation. Rather they are to stand alongside colleagues to support, guide and model and through a 'One Team Approach' show a united consistent response.

- Be a visible presence in the school and encourage appropriate conduct referring to 'Ready, respect, safe'.
- Support staff in returning students to learning by being part of restorative conversations and supporting staff in these conversations where required.
- Regularly celebrate staff and students.
- Encourage use of postcards home, positive phone calls, emails.
- Ensure staff training needs are identified and targeted.
- Use behaviour data, policy and practice to target and assess interventions.
- Regularly review the provision for students that fall beyond the range of written policies.
- Support all staff in managing students with complex behaviours challenges. E.g., One Team Approach, debrief following incidents.

## **Students will:**

Be Ready, Respect and Safe– we will explore and make explicit what these behaviours look like and what the expectations around them are.

**Parents and carers** are expected to work in partnership with the school to promote positive behaviour and seek solutions where required.

Sign the home school agreement which sets out the expectations.

## **Promoting Safe behaviour:**

As a starting point, we have in place a variety of systems to promote safe behaviour:

Clear and concise expectations of behaviour (Ready, Respect and Safe) will be described, modelled and encouraged through assemblies, circle times, lunchtimes and in learning time, to ensure that all students understand what is acceptable and safe. This provides the opportunity to reinforce expectations of behaviour and respect throughout the school. Staff must challenge inappropriate behaviour, however, it must be fair, reasonable and necessary. Unconditional positive regard will be reinforced with all students and stakeholders at all times.

## **Use Positive Reinforcement through:**

- A smile, word of praise.
- Catch them being good.
- A recognition system in each learning space that acknowledges and celebrates individual effort (based on students' personal preferences).
- Displaying the students' work in the classroom or shared areas.
- Verbal and written praise from the class team or other adults in school for good learning, effort or behaviour.



- Students who have done some great learning will be asked to share their learning with other staff and classes.
- A public word of praise in front of a group, class or year, in assembly including 'Stars of the week'.
- A visit to the Head for commendation.
- Positive comments conveyed to parents by telephone or email.
- Postcards home.
- Recognition through signing, symbols, 'good ....'.

**Remember to meet students at their point of need and individualise the motivators and praise process accordingly.**

The 'persistent and consistent' approach that is taken by adults encourages students to understand that their behaviour and actions always impact upon others and as a result will have a response associated with this. Regular reminders of 'ready, respect, safe' are to be used as a non-confrontational approach to addressing behaviours that challenge.

**Many of our students require visual reminders to support positive behaviour for learning. We will display 'ready, respect, safe' in our classrooms and in shared spaces. Class teams will support modelling and exploration of these behaviours and produce visuals to support understanding** e.g., written word, symbols, pictures, post it notes, tick sheets.

**Supportive systems to understand and change unsafe behaviour:**

We understand that occasionally students will behave inappropriately. When students display unsafe behaviour, we will encourage them to manage their behaviour in a positive way. We use Restorative Practice and Natural Consequences.

### **Restorative Practice**

Restorative practice is based on four key features:

- **RESPECT** – for everyone by listening to other opinions and learning to value them.
- **RESPONSIBILITY** - taking responsibility for your own actions.
- **REPAIR** – developing the skills within our school community so that its individual members have the necessary skills to identify solutions that repair harm and ensure behaviours are not repeated.
- **RE-INTEGRATION** - working through a structured, supportive process that aims to solve the problem and remain within the school community.

Our school uses restorative practice to encourage everyone to take responsibility for their behaviours. All staff have either been trained or have access to training in restorative practice and will apply this to resolving situations in school. This approach starts with a restorative enquiry, if conflict arises, over low-level issues i.e., friendship breakups, disputes over games, and not responding to reasonable adult requests.



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## **Staged approach**

We will help support students who may be showing unsafe behaviour through a staged approach.

All staff will follow this approach as a **guide (remember flexible consistency)** to make explicit the expectations of students who are beginning to show unsafe behaviour. This should be done with the expectation that this is a personalised approach, as detailed specifically within the individual's Positive behaviour Support Plan. Visual support should be used to support communication and understanding.

## **Redirection – gentle encouragement**

### **Verbal reminders**

This stage makes explicit the expectation. Examples are...

"I am expecting you to..... (not talk when I am talking, etc)"

"That doesn't look .... (ready, respect, safe) how about we...."

"This behaviour is stopping learning. What do you need to behave safely?"

### **Second verbal reminder**

This stage makes explicit the expectation followed by a natural consequence/logical response where appropriate. Examples are...

"I am expecting kind hands at all times. When students don't use kind hands, they need to sit/ play separately from others so everyone can be kept safe".

### **Signposting**

A clear verbal/visual signpost delivered privately wherever possible making the student aware of their behaviour, the impact, reminding them of previous success.

### **Space to reflect - If behaviour was repeated again.**

"I can see you are still finding it hard to.../ not to.... I am not going to give up on you, how can I help?" How about we... Let's...

### **Internal Referral**

Move to another space – support from pastoral/another staff member with student connection.

### **Restorative meeting**

### **One Team Approach**

If you need further clarification about any of these strategies then please contact your Headteacher.



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## **We will achieve consistency through adult behaviours:**

- Consistent language, consistent response/ referring to the agreement/contracting between staff and students. Simple and clear expectations reflected in all conversations about behaviour.
- Consistent 'follow up' Staff to seek support with this where required but retaining ownership of repair and reintegration.
- Consistent positive reinforcement: Routine procedures for reinforcing, encouraging and celebrating appropriate behaviour.
- Consistent logical responses: clear and agreed.
- Consistent simple agreements/expectations referencing appropriate behaviour, icons, symbols and visual cues. 'Ready, respect, safe'.
- Consistent respect from adults even in the face of disrespect from a student.
- Consistent models of emotional control - Emotional restraint modelled as well as taught, staff team as role models for learners, learning alongside their students.
- Consistently reinforced rituals and routines for behaviour around the site.
- Consistent environment – consistent visual messages and core values.

This policy will be reviewed by all staff before going to the Advocates for approval.

This policy has been influenced by the book 'When the Adults Change, Everything Changes' by Paul Dix (2017), [www.innerworldwork.co.uk](http://www.innerworldwork.co.uk), [www.beaconhouse.org.uk](http://www.beaconhouse.org.uk), [www.pivotaleducation.com](http://www.pivotaleducation.com) – Behaviour Policy

Finnis, M. (2021) *'Independent Thinking On Restorative Practice: Building Relationships, Improving Behaviour and Creating Stronger Communities'* (Carmarthen: Independent Thinking Press).

Whitaker, D. (2021) *The Kindness Principle* Independent Thinking Press, Crown Buildings, Bancyfelin, Carmarthen, Wales.

Guidance Report from the Education Endowment Foundation - Improving Behaviour in Schools <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidancereports/behaviour>



## Behaviour for excellent teaching and learning – One Page Summary

High quality behaviour is underpinned by relationships, quality curriculum and positive recognition. The code of conduct Ready, respect, safe must be displayed in every learning space and referred to in conversations around behaviour.

### Consistencies in Adult Behaviour:

- Meet and greet learners into the learning space.
  - Model behaviours and build relationships.
  - Plan for engaging, inspiring and appropriately challenging lessons to meet learners at their individual point of need.
  - A mechanism for positive recognition is used within each learning space throughout the day.
  - Refer to Ready, Respect, Safe in all conversations about behaviour.
  - Be calm and give students 'take up time' throughout the staged approach.
- Connection before correction.
- Follow up every time and retain ownership and engage in restorative conversations with students – seek support with this where required.

The steps below are intended as a guide to be used in conjunction with a student's Positive Behaviour Support Plan. As a specialist education provider, we work with a range of difference and challenge and therefore should remain mindful of the importance of knowing the student and meeting them at their point of need. Give 'take up time' between each stage below.

| Steps                        | Action                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Redirection</b>           | Gentle encouragement – a 'nudge' in the right direction – be kind                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Reminders</b>             | A reminder of expectations Ready, Respectful, safe delivered privately wherever possible. Repeat reminders if necessary. De-escalate and diffuse where reasonable and possible and take the initiative to keep things at this stage. Refer to students PBS Plan                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Signposting</b>           | A clear verbal/visual signposting delivered privately wherever possible making the learner aware of their behaviour, the impact on others – cue them back into previous success. You are on their 'team' and want them to succeed.                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Space to reflect</b>      | Give the student a chance to reflect away from others. Speak to the student privately and give them another opportunity to engage. Offer a positive choice to do so.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Internal Referral</b>     | At this point the student will need to be supported wherever possible in another space, typically with Pastoral support. Record on C-POMS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Finding a way forward</b> | A restorative meeting should take place before going back into the learning space. If required, support should be sought for this to happen from pastoral or leadership team. Similarly, if the meeting happens and is unsuccessful - seek support.                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>One Team Approach</b>     | Although the One Team Approach is important in all aspects of how we support our students, at this point in the process it is crucial to engage with all involved including the student at the appropriate time. This should be an enquiry into behaviour that is solution focussed, using the enquiry process of: Assess, Plan Do, Review. Agree actions, targets, monitoring by whom and record on C-POMS. |



## Appendix

**Practical steps in managing and redirecting behaviour that challenges. The following information is a guide only. Knowing your students is the best approach to take. With consideration to their Positive Support Plan, the following may be useful.**

### Redirection

Gentle encouragement – a ‘nudge’ in the right direction – be kind.

### Reminder

A reminder of the expectations for learners **Ready, Respect, Safe** delivered privately to the student. Staff make them aware of their behaviour. The student has a choice to do the right thing - make it clear what this is as they may not be aware of what this is or looks like.

### Signposting

A clear verbal/visual signposting delivered privately to the student making them aware of their behaviour, the impact on others and clearly outlining the logical response if they continue. Students will be reminded of their previous good conduct to signpost your belief in them.

Scripted approaches at this stage are encouraged to support calm regulated interactions from all parties. An example may be:

#### **30 second intervention**

- Gentle approach, personal, non-threatening, side on, eye level or lower.
- State the behaviour that was observed and which rule/expectation/routine it goes against.
- Tell the student what the logical response to their actions will look like if they continue. Refer to previous good behaviour/learning as a model for the desired behaviour.
- Walk away from the student; allow them time to decide what to do next. If there are comments, as you walk away write them down and follow up later.

### Space to Reflect

- The student is asked to speak to staff away from others.
- Boundaries are reset.
- The student is asked to reflect on their next step. Make these clear – offer limited options. Again, they are reminded of their previous positive conduct/attitude/learning because you are on their team and want them to succeed.
- The student is given a final opportunity to re-engage with the learning / follow instructions.

### Internal Referral

If the step above is unsuccessful, then the learner will be supported to a different space, typically with Pastoral support or with a member of staff with whom the student has a connection.

**Staff will model calm behaviour. It is in nobody's interest to confront poor behaviour with anger.**



## **Restorative Meeting**

**Restorative meetings are central to repairing damage to trust between members of our community.**

When using restorative questioning the following questions will always be asked in a quiet and appropriate area. Restorative Questions will be first asked to the person who has been harmed and then to the individual responsible for the action causing harm. (See appendix for Restorative 'bubbles' from Mark Finnis which supports this process as a conversation and not delivered as a script)

- What's happened?
- Who has been hurt and in what way?
- What needs to happen now to put things right?

Create an agreement to work within:

- Only one person talks at a time.
- No interrupting.
- Be respectful of other.
- Listen carefully to each other.
- Confidentiality - explain that this is between the people involved (plus parents if required).
- Be aware of any safeguarding concerns and take appropriate measures where required.
- If it becomes evident that the students are not yet ready to engage with this process, reschedule when they are able to engage. Be creative with how you support engagement and participation.

If incidents are sustained or reoccur, a restorative conference may need to take place with all the affected people. Actions to repair the harm will be reasonable, fair and necessary and related to the incident. Feedback to parents will be given when a student has been hurt. The parent/carers of the student responsible for the action causing hurt may also be informed of the incident. It should always be made clear to the parent/carers that the situation was dealt with in a restorative manner.

## **One Team Approach**

Although the One Team Approach is important in all aspects of how we support our students, at this point in the process it is crucial to engage with all stakeholders involved including the student at the appropriate time, to find solution and move forward. This should be an enquiry into behaviour that is solution focussed, using the enquiry process of: Assess, Plan Do, Review. Agree actions, targets, monitoring by whom and record on C-POMS.

Stage 1 of The One Team the student will be supported by a member of the Pastoral Support Hub or leadership team who will:

- Support and if necessary, facilitate the restorative meeting.
- Develop an appropriate action plan with the student – share with wider team.
- Monitor, review and mentor using the action plan.
- Discuss both the logical response for the student if not meeting the required action alongside the positive outcomes for everyone if things improve.



If the agreed actions are not met, then we will address this and re contract/refine actions to enable a further opportunity for positive change.

Every effort will be made to encourage and support a change in the student's behaviour. Stage 2 Of the One Team Approach will be implemented where there is no positive change despite support and intervention. It is intended as a 360-degree view of the student involving parents/carers, staff external professionals and a member of the leadership team. Taking a holistic view of the current situation and seeking solutions that effect positive change. Actions to be recorded and monitored. This should be an enquiry into behaviour that is solution focussed, using the enquiry process of: Assess, Plan Do, Review. Agree actions, targets, monitoring by whom and record on C-POMS.

### **Exclusions**

Exclusions are few and far between at Mayflower Specialist Academy Trust. They occur when a serious breach of discipline has taken place. Such as: -

- Unprovoked violence to another student
- Unprovoked violence to staff
- Absconding from school
- Deliberate damage to property/work
- Smoking
- Persistent and deliberate disruption in school
- Possession of drugs

Only the Head of Site / Executive Head are able to take this decision and in all cases discussions with parents, staff, other agencies as part of our 'One Team Approach' will take place and in the case of a possible permanent exclusion discussions with Chair of Governors.

### **SCREENING AND SEARCHING**

There may be times when it is necessary to search pupils. The Trust will refer to government guidance.



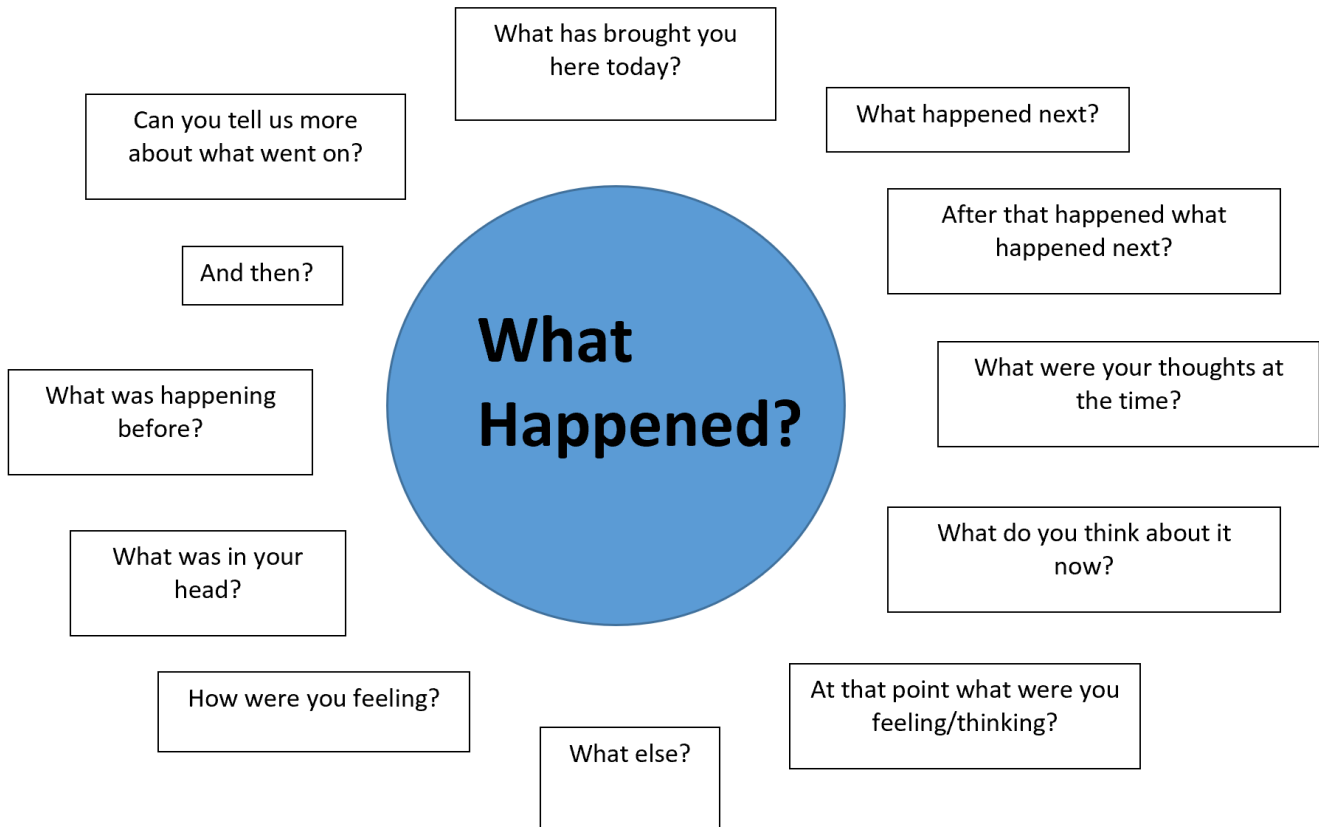
Use the following 3 'bubbles' as a guide to have a restorative conversation – it doesn't need to be a script – it's a way to find out what's gone on and how to move forward – all/some of these questions at this stage might be used to do this.

This is from independent thinking on Restorative practice – Mark Finnis, (2021)

**Storytelling.** This stage helps explore what happened ensuring we look at it from everyone's perspective. Exploring everyone's version of the truth.

Facts are what happened – our truth is true to us.

(Mark Finnis, 2021)

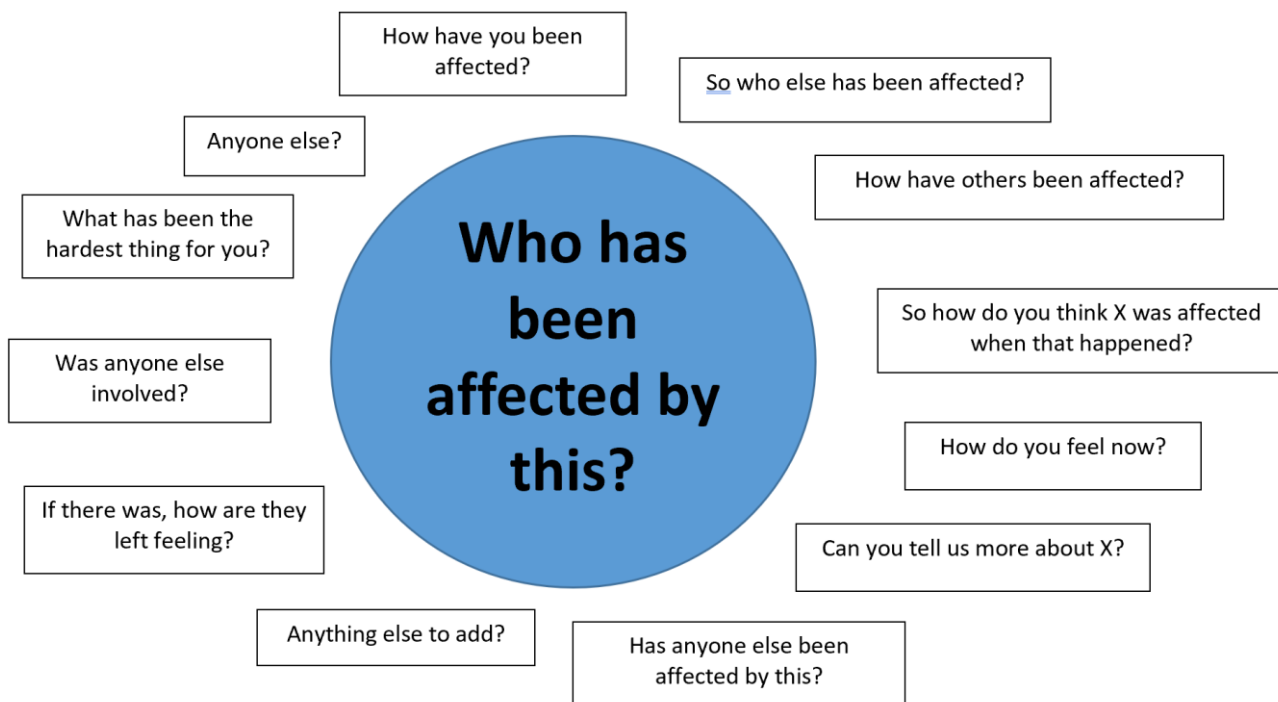


**Notes:**



**Impact.** This stage explores the impact of what's happened on people and relationships. It gets us to consider who else has been affected and explore unintended consequences. Ripple effect of actions....

(Mark Finnis)

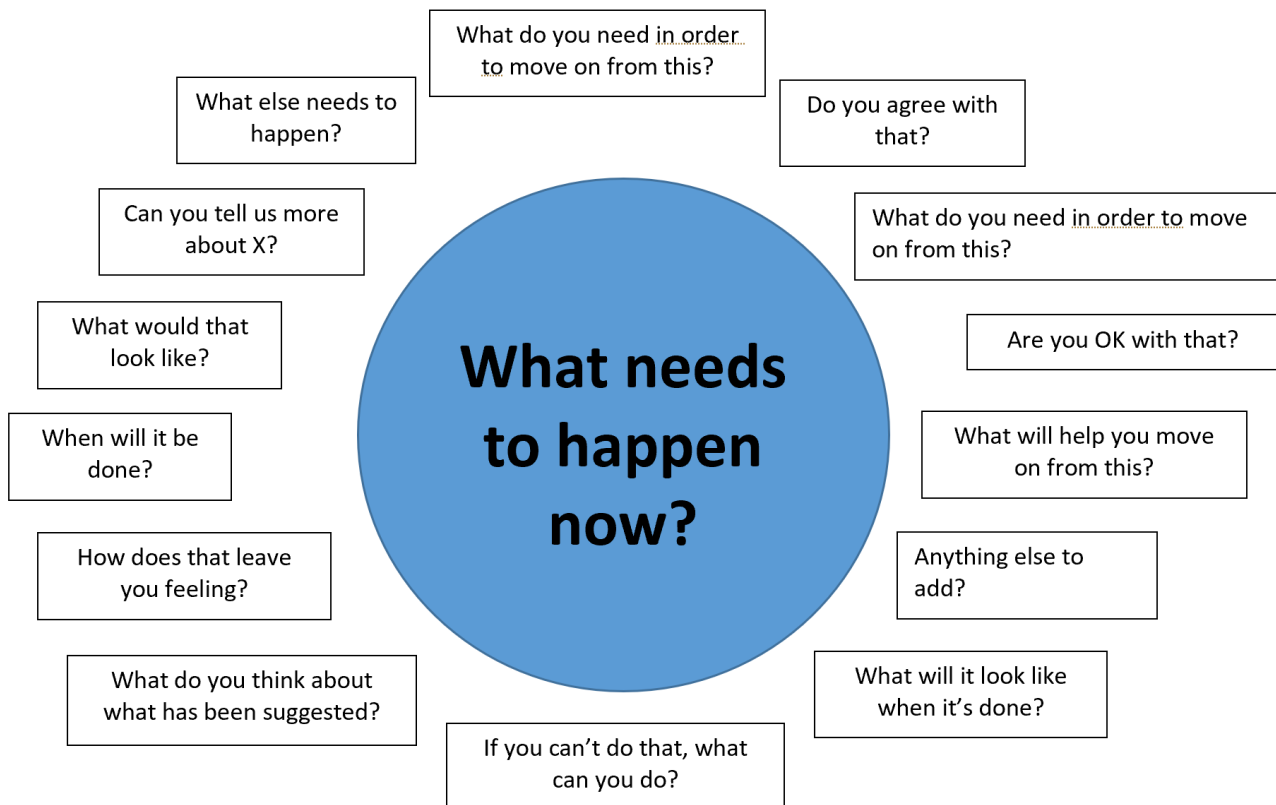


**Notes:**



**Solution Focus.** This stage is all about the future. Exploring what people need and then finding a way forward whilst preventing it happening again. This achieved through having a plan! It needs to be a plan that all involved agree on and that they own.

Mark Finnis



**Notes:**