

RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT POLICY (formerly Behaviour Management Policy)

PREAMBLE

Relationships are the cornerstones of community.

As a Christian School community, we believe that each person is a gift from God.

God loves each person, despite the failings of our relationships and actions at times.

We hold that all people are born in a broken relationship with God and that through Jesus' love and forgiveness our relationships with God and each others can be restored.

The staff of this school are custodians, entrusted with the duty of caring for the well-being of each child. This trust, given by parents, means that it is the duty of the school to provide a safe, stable environment within a framework of Christian love, where lifelong learning can be nurtured.

The school encourages parents to make their children aware of their rights and responsibilities and to support staff in their endeavours with the school's relationship management plan.

Rights of the Students

1. To feel confident, secure and happy in an atmosphere where individual differences are celebrated.
2. To be provided with opportunities to experience success in a supportive, stimulating learning environment.
3. To be given fair and appropriate access to school facilities and teachers' time.
4. To be given time to be heard, to express opinions and to ask questions in a climate of courtesy, kindness and respect.
5. To be provided with opportunities for the development of self-control and responsibility.
6. To form friendships and to learn co-operatively in a climate of respect for all individuals and property.
7. To have the right to a healthy and safe environment.

Responsibilities of Students

1. To help make the school a safe and co-operative place.
2. To respect the rights of all school members.
3. To make a positive intellectual, social, physical, and spiritual contribution to school life.
4. To accept and observe all school expectations.
5. To communicate their needs and concerns to the school staff.
6. To resolve differences in a constructive, restorative, non-violent and peaceful manner.
7. To allow teaching and learning to take place without distraction.
8. To be accountable for one's own actions.
9. To demonstrate responsible digital citizenship when using ICT

Our **aim** is that students learn respect for themselves and others in accordance with the beliefs and values we hold as a Christian community. These values incorporate the Lutheran Education Australia 'Lifelong Qualities for Learners' and the Department of Education 'Values for Australian Schooling'. See also Appendix 2.

POLICY

Therefore at St John's Lutheran School we:

- Provide as a foundation, an array of learning opportunities to develop personal and social competence to maximize educational opportunities and outcomes for all students
- Strategically maintain and develop healthy relationships within the school community at all times
- Support processes for maintaining a positive learning environment within the classroom as well as a harmonious, peaceful and safe playground
- Encourage students to acknowledge and learn from their mistakes, reconcile and resolve problems
- Recognise and learn to manage the underlying causes of behaviour
- Facilitate repair processes using restorative processes and language

PROCESSES

Code of conduct

To enact the policy at St John's Lutheran School, there is an emphasis upon developing a positive code of conduct and expectations for all students and staff in a school setting:

The following is expected of a student at St John's. A student will work towards:

- positively supporting and actively upholding the School's Mission Statement
- making optimum use of educational activities within and outside the classroom by being at the right place, at the right time, with the right materials for productive work
- respecting the rights of others to also derive maximum advantage from the educational opportunities provided by the school by being co-operative and supporting quality learning
- displaying self-respect in terms of appearance and behaviour by following the requirements of the school dress code, displaying good manners and behaving appropriately at all times
- displaying respect for others and building a sense of community by developing positive relationships and ensure that language and behaviour at all times. This includes showing respect to other community members, school facilities and resources
- recognising the need for a safe and healthy environment by following the school's Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy and by adhering to Workplace Health and Safety
- affirming and supporting those disadvantaged in our community and the wider community by resolving conflict peacefully.

As a school we have also adopted the 7 C's as a **guide for our school community to live by:**

THE SEVEN C'S

CHRIST

We ask the question, "What would Jesus want us to do in this situation?"

This means:

- ◆ Asking myself what would Jesus want me to do here?
- ◆ Endeavouring to follow His example reflecting characteristics of God through core values such as love, justice, compassion, forgiveness, service, humility, courage, hope, quality and appreciation
- ◆ Acting honestly and sincerely with integrity and in truth

CO-OPERATION

In healthy relationships we co-operate with others purposefully and peacefully demonstrating understanding, tolerance and inclusion.

This means:

- ◆ Being responsible for our behaviour by playing safely
- ◆ Trying to work out problems through negotiation, conflict resolution, peer mediation and restorative strategies
- ◆ Respecting others
- ◆ Thinking before we act
- ◆ Thinking about our behaviour and the effect it has on others
- ◆ Doing our best in all we do

In positive relationships, managing conflict means that the following are unacceptable as they may cause harm:

- ◆ Fighting
- ◆ Hitting
- ◆ Punching
- ◆ Pushing
- ◆ Spitting
- ◆ Threatening
- ◆ Throwing things
- ◆ Yelling at each other
- ◆ Intentional exclusion or teasing

COMMUNICATION

We communicate both verbally and non-verbally in socially acceptable ways.

This means:

- ◆ Speaking to others politely
- ◆ Using manners
- ◆ Using appropriate language that
 - respects the rights of others
 - is non threatening
 - is positive
 - encourages

Using respectful language in all relationships, including social media, with others means that the following are unacceptable as they may cause harm:

- ◆ Swearing
- ◆ Bullying
- ◆ Teasing
- ◆ Name calling
- ◆ Put-downs
- ◆ Sledging
- ◆ Abusing
- ◆ Verbal harassment

COURTESY

Good manners help build good relationships as we treat each other fairly and with respect.

This means:

- ◆ Moving safely and sensibly around the school to avoid injuring others
- ◆ Waiting patiently and quietly in line ready to move into class after recess and lunch
- ◆ Always asking permission before using other people's things

Being courteous means that the following are unacceptable as they may cause harm:

- ◆ Running on concrete areas and paths
- ◆ Being in out of bounds areas including classrooms without supervision
- ◆ Disturbing other classes whilst moving around the school
- ◆ Running or pushing on the stairs
- ◆ Using inappropriate manners

CONSIDERATION

Together we respect the rights and feelings of others.

This means:

- ◆ Always acting safely at school by making sure others are never frightened by fighting, pushing, bullying or teasing
- ◆ Respecting other people and ourselves by treating others with kindness, courtesy and respect
- ◆ Being honest
- ◆ Being a good sport and by helping others when needed

Considering others means that the following are unacceptable as they may cause harm:

- ◆ Any aggressive or rough play
- ◆ Throwing sand, sticks, stones or other objects
- ◆ Threatening others

CARE and COMPASSION

We care for ourselves, other, our property and our school environment.

This means:

- ◆ Using school equipment with care
- ◆ Making it easy for lost property to be returned by having it clearly labelled
- ◆ Keeping the school clean and tidy
- ◆ Taking pride in our school

Care of our school, other people's and our own property means that the following are unacceptable as they may cause harm:

- ◆ Stealing or damaging others belongings
- ◆ Misusing school equipment or property and classroom supplies given out to students
- ◆ Littering
- ◆ Walking on gardens
- ◆ Harming or teasing wildlife or plants
- ◆ Wasting water

CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP

We show Christian Leadership to others by serving, helping and encouraging others.

In the classroom

The **aim** of St John's **relationship management program** is to develop in all children self-discipline and a sense of responsibility for their own behaviour, and to help children understand that all behaviour has consequences which may either enhance or harm relationships.

To assist with establishing positive relationships with class members, teachers need to develop and implement **intentional relationship building strategies and activities**.

From day one, a good classroom atmosphere will be established where children and teachers develop genuine respect, concern and interest for each other.

Regular communication between teachers and parents will help build positive relationships.

For the maintenance of good relationships, at the beginning of the year class teachers are required to negotiate a set of **classroom expectations** with their class. These need to be displayed in a prominent position in their rooms. The classroom expectations will reflect our school values and the principles of our relationship management policy. These will form a guide for each class to establish the way that things will be done.

Teachers are encouraged to use **restorative chats** and **reflective circle discussions**, with the class or small groups, to deal with breakdowns in relationships or misbehaviour at both preventative and intervention levels.

Teachers are asked to use the terms **expectation and consequences** rather than rules and punishment which can have negative connotations.

At parent teacher meetings and in class letters teachers should make parents aware of the expectations in their classrooms and the consequences of not fulfilling them. Parents are encouraged to support teachers in their expectations for children's behaviour.

In the playground the playground duty teacher will:

- Use restorative language when addressing the choices children make
- Refer and re-direct students needing time to reflect on an inappropriate behaviour
- Direct any children who are unable to work restoratively or involved in incidences that are serious, or require more time, to the Assistant Principal immediately
- Direct any children on Individual Support Plans to the Assistant Principal as necessary.

A consistent, positive, predictable and fair whole school approach to relationship management will benefit all. Therefore we have adopted the restorative processes set out below.

Restorative processes

It is important that as a whole school everybody uses the same positive process. That is why we have adopted the reflective thinking questions which aim to **reflect, repair and reconnect** relationships. More background information is available in Appendix 1.

Reflective thinking questions

1. What has happened?
2. What were you thinking at the time?
3. What have you thought about since?
4. Who has been affected by this?
5. What needs to happen to make things right?
6. How can we do things differently to make sure this doesn't happen again?

When students avoid responding:

Was it the right thing or the wrong thing to do?
What exactly are you sorry for?
You didn't answer my question.

As part of the reflective thinking process students may be asked to fill out a **Reflective Thinking Plan**. This process has its foundation in our school values and is based on shared concern about:

- the **consequences** of their behaviour
- how they might **heal the harm** that has happened
- how they may **better manage** their behaviour in the future

After completion of the plan a copy should be forwarded to the Relationship Management Coordinator. If a child has to fill out two plans in the week, contact may need to be made with parents by the teacher or the Relationship Management Coordinator .

A record will be kept of Reflective Thinking Plans.

There may also be occasions when the Assistant Principal or Principal contact parents after the first incident if the inappropriate behaviour warrants it.

When major incidents of misbehaviour or relationship breakdown occur a **Restorative Conference** will be negotiated with concerned parties and parents.

Support needs to be given to both the 'wrongdoer' and the 'victim' to enable restoration to occur.

At times it may be necessary as part of this process to isolate or exclude a student from school for a period of time if the situation involves a category of behaviour or incident that legally necessitates this action. For example, extreme violent behaviour.

Time Out

If there is an instance of unsafe play, or inappropriate language or behaviour, the wrongdoer will be required to sit out during play periods on a designated area, on their own, in the Under Cover Activity Areas.

Students may be required to work through a reflective thinking sheet or participate in an act of community service, such as tidying up, during this time out period.

This system will give children the opportunity to reflect on the choices they have made and to develop positive strategies for the future.

Staff are required to keep accurate records in the "Time Out Register" provided with the clipboard when they are on playground duty. These records will be monitored after lunch.

The Assistant Principal or Principal will contact parents of students who continue to do the wrong thing to discuss a plan to improve behaviour.

Lunchtime Catch Up Work

If a class teacher sets lunchtime catch up work for a student to complete a Work Completion Slip should be filled out and sent to the Library or Undercover Area with the student at lunch time.

It is the teacher's responsibility to inform the supervising teacher of students attending.

Lunchtime work should only be used on an occasional basis as playtime activities are beneficial for students.

Application of Consequences

We consistently reinforce positive behaviour and strive to ensure that consequences for inappropriate behaviour are fairly administered and follow due process. Consequences are applied in an attempt to support behavioural change and enhanced relationships. Corporal punishment is not permitted to be used in Lutheran schools; indeed, any physical interaction between teacher and student when implementing disciplinary measures is unacceptable.

Ongoing disruptive classroom behaviours

It is primarily the role of the classroom teacher to collaboratively set expectations, monitor and maintain a healthy teaching and learning environment in the classroom. Where specific students demonstrate disregard for this and continually breach set expectations the teacher should use a variety of consequences to promote compliance including the Reflective Thinking Plan. If these measures are unsuccessful then referral to the Relationship Management Coordinator should be made.

Disruptive student behaviours impacting on the teaching and learning in a classroom may be dealt with by the school using the following progression of strategies :

- restating desired behavioural expectations
- use of positive reinforcement
- identifying and limiting triggers for behaviours
- contact with parents to receive parental support
- restorative chat and intentional relationship building activities
- Individual Behaviour Management Plan
- Accountability Interview with the Assistant to the Principal
- use of a buddy classroom for a period of withdrawal from regular class lessons
- withdrawal from class to the office
- In-school Suspension with specific re-entry strategies
- contact with parent to attend school to take student home for remainder of day
- negotiated managed attendance
- formal Restorative Conference
- formal suspension from school
- expulsion from school if warranted

Background Information

1. Lutheran Education Ethos

Restorative Practices: The basis for developing well-being and building strong relationships

Student Well-being and Relational Management Policy is inspired by the Gospel and reflects the love and forgiveness that God shows us each and every day. Within a restorative *practices* framework, discipline is carried out in the context of forgiveness which allows a repentant student to restore relationships. As we experience God's forgiveness we can then pass it on by forgiving others. Forgiveness brings reconciliation and restoration of relationships. While forgiveness is practised, consequences for inappropriate behaviour remain an integral part of the policy as a way of building mutual respect, self-worth and creating positive relationships.

In the spirit of the Christian Gospel, *St John's Lutheran School* is committed to using Restorative Practices with all members of our community to build harmonious relationships and resolve issues of concern or conflict, openly and respectfully.

In LEA's *A Vision for Learners and Learning*, (2005) the importance of community and relationships is affirmed. Key values such as forgiveness and hope, justice and love are experienced and expressed when living in community. Aspirational lifelong qualities for learners who attend Lutheran schools include treating themselves and others with consideration as well as fostering 'a respectful, inclusive atmosphere in which people can communicate confidently and with trust' (p. 7)

The Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians (2008) not only encourages the development of successful learners but also highlights the importance students who are able to manage their emotional, mental, spiritual and physical well-being who develop respect and empathy for others and who accept responsibility for their own actions. The importance of healthy relationships is also emphasised. In addition, the Australian Curriculum (2010) features the importance of ethical behaviour and personal and social competence. These capabilities are to be developed throughout students' schooling.

From our foundation, *St John's Lutheran School* has attended to developing policies that align with our beliefs and values. Therefore a range of proactive programs to foster the development of relationships are implemented across *St John's Lutheran School*. These programs foster healthy and caring relationships that build community and contribute to effective teaching and learning.

In addition, Restorative Practices (RP), a philosophy and continuum of processes based on the premise that repairing harm done to people and relationships, is a very effective way to resolve conflict. A core belief is that the wrongdoings and misbehaviours that bring disruptions to classrooms, and the hurtful behaviours that are so often associated with conflict, are primarily not just 'breaking rules', but actually result in harm to individuals, groups and the whole school community.

In a school setting, restoration of relationships for effective learning is the ultimate goal of restorative practices.

In response to this, RP encourages a profound fairness, and a culture of listening across our school community. It is based on core values that build an ethos of respect, inclusion, accountability, taking responsibility, commitment to relationships and the development of social and emotional competencies. People involved develop personal awareness and responsibility while learning and using lifelong skills such as active listening, expressing emotion, facilitating dialogue and problem-solving.

RP is also based on the belief that the people involved in a conflict, wrongdoing, or misbehaviour, need to be actively involved in the process of resolution. Imposed (and purely punitive) solutions can be less effective and less educative.

The RP continuum of interventions and processes is applicable across all levels of our school community: from more formal responses such as our round tables to more informal restorative chats.

It is the cornerstone of our anti-bullying, relational management and pastoral care procedures and policies. Trained staff facilitate the processes. Staff, students, and parents are all encouraged to participate in a 'restorative pedagogy' that builds a school culture that is fair, safe, and encourages effective relationships and learning.

We seek, not just to put a stop to harassing or discriminatory behaviour, but also to repair harm, 'put things right' and bring about reconciliation between the parties in the spirit of Matthew 18:15.

RP forms the cornerstone of all policies and procedures relating to relational management, staff / student welfare and complaints / conflict resolution.

All staff and students are expected to be supportive of and participate in Restorative Practices when they are involved in a conflict or issue. Parents are asked to support a 'restorative pedagogy' that builds a school culture that is fair, safe, and encourages effective learning.

2. Definition: What are Restorative Practices?

Restorative Practices (RP) are a philosophy and a continuum of processes from informal chats to formal structured conversations or mediation. RP is based on the following premises:

- I. Conflict causes harm that needs to be repaired. "Pain that is not transformed will be transmitted."
Richard Rohr
- II. The use of fight or flight is generally inappropriate responses to conflict. We do not run away or give in to conflict. We do not pay back.
- III. Conflict needs to be addressed by all parties, preferably face-to-face, in a structured, safe environment. (Exceptions to this are detailed in *St John's Lutheran School's* Child Protection Policy when there are special circumstances relating to sexual harassment or abuse)
- IV. People involved in a conflict, wrongdoing or misbehaviour need to be actively involved in the process of resolution. Imposed solutions or punishments can be less effective and less educative.
- V. Using RP is not a 'soft option'. Core values include respect, inclusion, accountability and commitment to relationships.
- VI. Participants learn social and emotional skills they will use throughout their lives such as: active listening, facilitating dialogue, problem-solving, expressing emotion appropriately, developing personal awareness, empathy and taking responsibility.
- VII. Logical consequences and sanctions (e.g. withdrawals / detentions, suspensions, staff disciplinary procedures) are still used but in the context of RP (e.g. 'what can you do to make things right?').

3. Special Conditions: The use of Restorative Practices

The use of RP is NOT PERMITTED under the following circumstances (but RP may be used to conclude a matter on the advice of legal personnel):

- Where mandatory reporting is required e.g. alleged child sexual abuse. Advice of Police or Department of Child Safety to be followed.
- Where an adult wishes to make a complaint through the Safe Place Process. Advice of Safe Place Committee to be followed.
- Where a matter involves unlawful behaviour and it is deemed necessary to report it to the Police. Advice of Police or Department of Child Safety to be followed.
- Where a parent expressly forbids the use of RP with a child under the age of 18.
- Where a staff member, after discussion with the Complaints Contact Officer, chooses to follow another path to achieve resolution of a complaint.

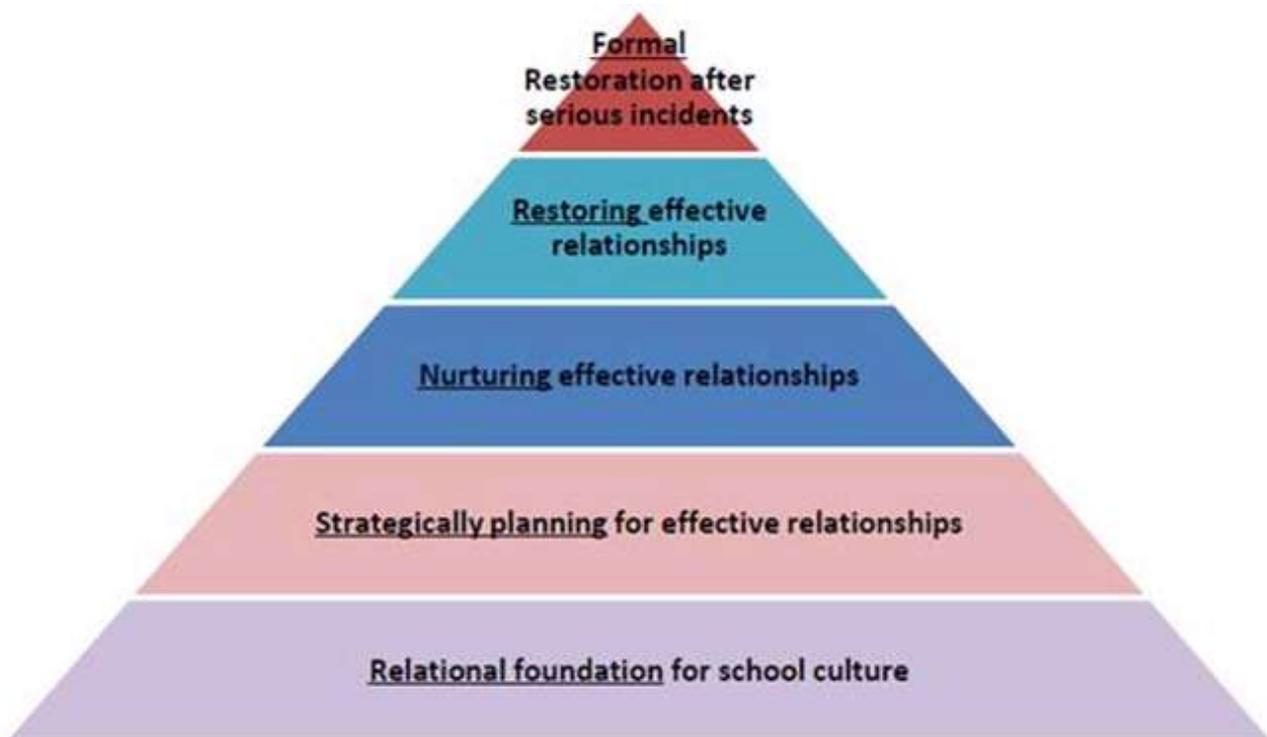
The use of Restorative Practices MAY NOT BE RECOMMENDED:

- Where the matter is a very sensitive one (e.g. sexual harassment), or involves particularly sensitive students or staff members.
- Where there is a significant disparity of power or status between parties to the conflict.
- Where considerable time has elapsed since the dispute and parties have clearly 'moved on'.
- Where one party has initiated legal proceedings.

The use of Restorative Practices WILL GENERALLY BE REQUIRED by the School:

- Where a student or staff member has admitted to wrongdoing or harmful behaviour (intentionally or unintentionally)
- Where the School requires Restorative Practices to be used as part of disciplinary proceedings in response to alleged harmful behaviour by a student or staff member.

The accompanying diagram demonstrates how working restoratively applies to all levels of school life at St John's Lutheran School.



A Relational Foundation for Whole-of-School Culture, adapted with permission from a diagram by Lesley Oliver