Enhancing Restorative Practice in Schools: Learning from Ireland

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The Professional Development Service for Teachers

- The PDST is Ireland’s largest single support service offering professional learning opportunities to teachers and school leaders in a range of pedagogical, curricular and educational areas.

What we do:

- **In-school support**
- **Online planning tools and support materials**
- **Workshops, seminars, conferences and courses**
Restorative Practice Pilot Project Phase 1: Provision for Continuous Professional Development
Sustained Support Model of CPD

‘sustained and collaborative CPD was linked with a positive impact upon teachers’ repertoire of teaching and learning strategies, their ability to match these to their students’ needs, their self-esteem, confidence and their commitment to continuing learning and development’ (Cordingley et al., 2003, p.8).
Criteria for Selecting Schools

- School Size
- Urban/Rural
- DEIS
- Primary/Post-Primary
- Gender
- Gaelscoileanna
- Special Schools
Restorative Practice Phase 1: Provision for CPD and the model of sustained support

Restorative Practice Pilot Project School Visits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Visit # 1</th>
<th>Visit # 2</th>
<th>Visit # 3</th>
<th>Visit # 4</th>
<th>Visit # 5</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 hour meeting</td>
<td>2 hour Core Team session 1</td>
<td>2 hour Core Team session 2</td>
<td>2 hour Core Team session 3</td>
<td>2 hour Core Team session 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 hour whole staff session 1</td>
<td>2 hour whole staff session 2</td>
<td>2 hour whole staff session 3</td>
<td>2 hour whole staff session 4</td>
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Key Learning from schools

Restorative Practice promotes restoration of relations if conflict arises. It is a fair process & each child has a voice in the process. (School S)

It provides a space for people to reflect. It focuses on the behaviour and not the person. It has a calming effect on people. There is a much stronger sense of fairness associated with it. It is solution focused. The language used is more effective. It encourages participants to take greater responsibility. (School I)

This pilot has shifted our parameters with regard to conflict resolution and has undoubtedly enhanced my relationships with pupils and parents. I think relationships, fairness and transparency of due process have really served the school community well. (School P)
Reflection Statements from schools

There has been a noticeable change in attitudes away from very traditional “let’s sanction the student” to “let’s listen to the student”. It has opened up staff-room discussion on how we interact as a school community. It has been a very positive and worthwhile experience for us as a school. (School I)

The Check In/Check Out activity on feelings is working well each day and pupils are enjoying their special moment to speak in class while it also provides the teacher with a lot of information on the form of pupils on a particular day. The fact that all teachers throughout the school are being trained in Restorative Practice makes it easier to implement. So far all teachers are enjoying the course. (School J)

The fact that RP is so effective with adults also is a huge benefit to the school as we, as a staff, have a process that we can use to address conflict with a view to resolving it. (School T)
Next Steps ....

- Follow Up Visit with schools from Phase 1

- 38 Schools in Phase 2 2019 - 2020

“as a species we require community bonds for our emotional well-being” (Mirsky, 2011, p.46)
Míle Buíochas.

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