

Restorative Practice

Restorative Practices developed from the move towards Restorative Justice in dealing with offenders as a means to changing behaviour, McCluskey et al (2008). It can often be incorporated into other measures applied through a 'whole school' approach to behaviour. However, the language used can be interpreted as being directive, and often associated with assertive discipline (Canter and Canter 1992) approaches, still used quite widely in schools in the UK, with children praised for making 'good choices' when they exhibit desirable behaviour and 'poor choices' when they do not. Rules must be followed, and consequences of disobeying the rules are likely to become increasingly serious. A criticism of this approach is that rather than encouraging children to engage with the situation, we are likely to turn them into compliant beings, Kohn (2006). Is that the intended outcome?

McCluskey et al (2008) discuss the fact that this type of approach is likely to work best where staff are willing to reflect honestly on the quality of their own interactions with children. They suggest that although it does not take additional time to speak differently to children, it may take time to analyse 'how' they are speaking and how the children receive their communication. This echoes Dix (2017) view that it is the adults who need to change.

References

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McCluskey, G.; Lloyd, G.; Stead, J.; Kane, J.; Riddell, S. and Weedon, E. (2008) 'I was dead restorative today': from restorative justice to restorative approaches in school, *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 38:2, 199-216.