

INTRODUCTION

RESTORE is the fruit of an ongoing collaboration among a group of Head Teachers, consultants, researchers and charities working in and with schools to implement and embed a restorative approach.

We are connected by a shared belief in the value of the philosophy and practice of restorative approaches to help schools at this unprecedentedly difficult time. The details of the people and organisations involved can be found on the RESTORE poster and at the website: restoreourschools.com

The restorative approach in schools is values-based and needs-led. It highlights the importance of relationships for emotional wellbeing, resolving conflict, preventing harm and building resilient communities. The approach works by ensuring a consistent and congruent approach to the building, maintaining and repairing of relationships. The approach enables decisions to be made with reference to five core restorative principles:

- Everyone has a unique perspective
- Our thoughts and feelings influence our behaviours
- Our actions have a ripple effect
- We have needs that connect us to people and purpose
- The people best placed to find solutions to problems are the people affected by the problem

The seven themes represented by the seven letters of the word RESTORE emerged from our discussions on the current pandemic and its impact on us all, but particularly on schools: the students, parents and care-givers and the school staff.

The letters of the word RESTORE, could be seen as falling into two areas of need, one the recent past and our experiences of it, and the other looking ahead to how we want to be as a result of this experience:

- The first four letters of the acronym, relating to **Recognise, Empathise, Safety** and **Trauma**, are connected to what has happened and its effects on us.
- The last three letters, relating to **Opportunity, Relationships** and **Engagement**, are key to how we are going forward into a new normal.

It is not meant to be a linear model, to be followed letter by letter. Rather, the themes from RESTORE are connected, they shade into one another and influence each other, they overlap and interlock and reflect one another.

Our aim is to support schools in their strategic thinking in preparation for re-opening, whenever and in whatever shape that takes, and in their operational planning for the return of pupils. We hope that this guidance material provides a framework to help school leaders, teachers and support staff critically assess and reflect on the school's practice and provision as they prepare for a phased return to school.

The write-up for each theme includes a definition of the theme, why it particularly matters at this time, and some suggested questions to guide thinking and planning. We actively encourage you to make contact with us via the website to let us know what we might provide that would be of value to you.

The resources we are co-creating are shared here freely, for anyone to use as a complete tool or to dip into, whether the school has a restorative ethos or not. Above all, we hope that when the time is right for schools to re-open, this model can provide a useful contribution to building safe and healthy schools and communities.