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Capturing Change: A Review of the Implementation of Restorative Approaches and its Outcomes within a Local Authority in North East England.

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Abstract

In 2007-08 Durham County Council successfully secured funding from the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) to support the implementation of Restorative Approaches in two secondary schools over a three year period. The long term overarching aims of the Restorative Approaches project are inextricably linked to positive learning outcomes and achievement delivered through: promoting mutually respectful relationships; building community cohesion; developing resilient and self-regulating learners; promoting positive learning environments; and removing the causal factors leading to non-attendance, conflict and misbehaviour. Having explored a range of approaches, the work of Dr Belinda Hopkins, which offers an educative and skills based approach, was deemed most appropriate in terms of delivering the vision and aims of the project. Following a rigorous evaluation of the implementation of Restorative Approaches in the two project schools, positive changes were found in pupils' and teachers' ability to understand and communicate better with one another, in school ethos and behaviour, and in pupils' attitudes towards teaching and learning resulting in higher levels of participation and engagement.

Introduction

Restorative practice gives primacy to social relationships. Rather than support monologues of knowing, the aim of restorative practice is to create contexts for learning in which the voice of the other may be heard, and where dialogue and reflective enquiry prompt learning that is inclusive and socially informed. This focus reflects Vygotsky's contention that our learning is built from the outside in, through our relations with others (Macready, 2009, p.218).

This quote provides a concise picture of the main premise of restorative practice which is to enable people to develop a strong sense of social belonging and foster meaningful relationships with one another. It is based on restorative justice ideas (first implemented in the arena of criminal justice) on dealing with challenging behaviour and conflict in a school context. Restorative approaches puts the focus primarily on building and repairing relationships rather than on managing and controlling behaviour and 'puts repairing harm done to relationships and people over and above the need for assigning blame and dispensing punishment' (Hopkins, 2004).

In other words, Restorative Approaches (RA) aims to engage people in building, maintaining and restoring relationships when these have been negatively affected by inappropriate behaviour. In education, in particular, its main purpose is to work proactively with pupils in order to develop positive learning communities and, when required, swiftly reintegrate pupils back into the school community by helping all individuals involved in a conflict to recognise and understand the consequences of the harmful behaviour and to prevent it reoccurring in the future (González, 2011). It is thus ensured that every situation is educative.

The uniqueness of RA lies in the involvement of all parties, affected by what happened, in resolving the issues presented through identifying and addressing the needs of all concerned in order to move forward. This collective process of addressing harm leads to restitution, resolution and reconciliation through an approach that is high on both accountability and support (Morrison, 2003). The aim of a safe school community, Morrison argues, is to help individuals discharge shame and then to build pride, leading to the ultimate goal of becoming self-regulating within their community. This process therefore facilitates the transformation of conflict into cooperative relationships and empowers participants through their involvement in decision-making (Buckley & Maxwell, 2007).

In contrast to the more traditional punitive approach, which aims to identify and discipline the wrongdoer through the most appropriate punishment, the restorative approach seeks understanding through responses to the following questions:

- What happened?
- What were you thinking and feeling?
- Who has been affected and how?
- What do you need in order to move forward?
- What needs to happen to repair the harm done?
- What have we all learnt so as to make different choices next time?
  (see Appendix IV for the RA 5 theme model)

In education, circles, restorative conversations, informal mediation meetings and conferences aim to support those involved to resolve issues and repair relationships by being given the opportunity to talk about what happened, describe their thoughts and feelings, explore how they have been affected and suggest ways to repair the harm caused. According to the International Institute for Restorative Practices (2009):

> *'the fundamental unifying hypothesis of restorative practices is simple: that human beings are happier, more cooperative and productive, and more likely to make positive changes in their behaviour when those in positions of authority do things with them, rather than to them or for them'.*

In other words, when pupils in a school setting are actively involved in addressing the wrong and making things right by having an opportunity to express and exchange their emotions, they will experience a feeling of fairness and will be more likely to develop rapport and strong emotional bonds which will positively affect their subsequent behaviour. It is recognised, in line with Sergiovanni

(1994), that relationships between school members (teachers, pupils, and staff members) are not merely instrumental but have a moral interdependence.

The impact of restorative approaches, therefore is not only reactive, aiming to resolve conflict after it has occurred, but most importantly, it aims to proactively build positive relationships to help prevent the wrongdoing from happening at all. In education, the emphasis is on creating a proactive school ethos where there is a good sense of social connectedness, combined with respect for all individuals, dialogue and social collaboration – in this environment, 'pupils will learn connection, inclusion and social responsibility' (Macready, 2009, p.215).

Restorative approaches are very different to punitive school discipline policies, which can have a negative impact on the offending pupil by contributing to delinquency (Maguin & Loeber, 1996) and may lead to increased exclusions, poor academic achievement, negative attitudes, social isolation and a continued cycle of failure. In addition, contrary to common belief, studies have shown that zero-tolerance policies in schools do not improve school safety (for a review see González, 2011) and are ultimately ineffective as corrective measures.

Even though this field of study is relatively new, several success stories have been documented raising the popularity of restorative approaches in educational settings. Evaluation studies, alongside teachers' reports of implementing restorative approaches in particular schools have shown benefits in various areas of school life. A relevant study in New Zealand (Buckley & Maxwell, 2007) reported that all teachers held positive attitudes and valued restorative approaches as an effective approach in managing conflict and found that fewer pupils were excluded from the school community. There was also an improvement in pupil engagement and achievement, and a better overall school climate.

Similarly, the National Evaluation of the Restorative Justice in Schools Programme (Youth Justice Board for England and Wales, 2004) revealed positive staff and pupil attitudes especially for those schools that had implemented restorative practices using a whole-school approach. Of the 600 mediation conferences held, with the parties involved in conflict, the majority were successful in helping resolve disputes relevant to bullying, gossiping, name calling, conflict with teachers and violent crime.

Comparable findings are reported in another study carried out at West Oakland in California where RA was used as an alternative to zero-tolerance policies. Such school-based restorative approaches led to suspensions and exclusions declining by 87% and strengthened relationships in the school, with pupils assuming greater responsibility and autonomy (Sumner, Silverman & Frampton, 2010). Other studies have looked at how school communities can make use of restorative approaches to address drug and alcohol problems (Karp & Breslin, 2001), bullying and victimisation (Morrison, J. 2002) or have provided evidence of the effects of restorative practices drawing on particular case studies (see, for instance, Macdonald, 2008; Mirsky, 2009; International Institute for Restorative Practices, 2009).

Within the UK, in particular, an evaluation of Scottish schools showed evidence of improved relationships within the school community in half of the schools studied. This was identified through the views and actions of staff and pupils and through measurable reductions in playground incidents, discipline referrals, exclusions and use of external behaviour support (Kane et al., 2007). However, a readiness to embrace a change in culture, in moving away from more traditional disciplinary practices,was more marked in primary schools and less so in secondary schools, where there was considerable resistance from staff to adopt alternative approaches to the more traditional punitive methods. Furthermore, a 2009 evaluation of Restorative Practices in Schools in Bristol reported a better climate for learning, a positive impact on attendance rates and reductions in fixed-term exclusions as a result of the implementation of restorative approaches (Skinns, Du Rose & Hough, 2009).

Last but not least, the story of Hull provides a good example of how restorative approaches have been implemented successfully and adopted within a large number of educational settings. Its positive impact is demonstrated, for instance, in the following case of a primary school which came out of special measures quickly and two years later, was judged by OFSTED inspectors as 'outstanding':

As we improved relationships the benefits happened quickly: reduced disruption in lessons, reduced lost breaks or privileges, reduced racial incidents, improved attendance both of staff and pupils, improved punctuality and improved family engagement. These results then impacted on even more significant figures relating to pupil progress and attainment. The quality of speaking and listening has improved standards in literacy, and greater pupil and family engagement has improved attendance and achievement, while also significantly decreasing our level of complaints and conflict in the community' (Macdonald, 2008, pp 151-152).

Implementation

An understanding of the wider county context, at the point of initiating Restorative Approaches (RA) within the school context, is essential in terms of appreciating its evolution. Pockets of effective restorative practices were already present within some services in County Durham. The instigation to extend restorative ways of working into the school setting came from an expression of interest from local schools following a National Restorative Justice Conference, hosted by Durham County Council in 2008. In response, Durham County Council secured funding from the Dedicated Schools Grant, with an aim to support two schools through a three year pilot study.

A project team, with overall responsibility for the implementation of RA within the school setting initiated three key actions: the commissioning of a high profile external company director and course developer/main trainer in the field to both inform strategic development and deliver high quality training; the appointment of a full time Project Manager and the commissioning of Durham University's Centre for Evaluation and Monitoring (CEM) to evaluate the three year pilot.

The selection process of the pilot schools was carefully managed following an initial awareness raising day for all secondary schools within the county, led by the external provider. Expressions of interest were invited through detailed bids which aimed to demonstrate ability and willingness to match prescribed readiness criteria based on the knowledge & experience of Hopkins (commissioned external provider). Face to face interviews with Headteachers from potential schools followed, which were designed to determine levels of commitment and capacity for change. Two pilot schools were subsequently selected and staff training arrangements were secured for both staff and Head teachers. It should be noted that the decision to extend the invite to secondary schools only was made on the basis of capacity issues.

Decisions pertaining to the RA model and training provider adopted were given thorough consideration. Members of the project team were well versed in the scripted conference model. However, guided by a need to extend the good work of local schools on Social Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL), a range of other models and providers were explored resulting in the Five Theme based model, now known as Core Beliefs, devised by Hopkins (see Appendix IV). This particular model was identified as fit for purpose. It was adopted in light of its educative skill based framework which, when internalised, offers individuals 'infinite flexibility' (Hopkins, 2014) when interacting with others in any situation and furthermore, when embedded across the school has the potential to inform consistent ways of interacting and working, both inside and outside the classroom:

> *"Acting restoratively is not about working from a script or a pre-ordained formula one moment and then addressing another issue in a different way. A restorative mindset helps people to act in a consistent way... (Hopkins, 2009, p.33)*

The commissioning of Hopkins ensured that all parties involved had access to high quality training and the expertise of a pioneering practitioner in relating restorative practices to the school setting. Participating staff embarked upon a five day training programme which modelled and actively engaged participants in the key elements of: community building, restorative language, mind set and ways of interacting and working, both proactively and reactively. Thus equipping staff with the knowledge, understanding and expertise required to inform the application of effective practice and enable staff to facilitate change elements associated with restorative ways of working within their own setting. Ongoing support for the implementation of RA was secured through shared guidance on best practice (see Appendix V), direct consultancy with Hopkins and input from the Project Manager and team.

The Evaluation Process

The project schools (named A and B) which implemented Restorative Approaches as part of the pilot between September 2009 and July 2012 were contrasted against one comparator school (School C) with similar demographic characteristics. Participants' anonymity has been preserved in the presentation of the findings. The study has adhered to all ethical obligations as suggested by Rubin and Rubin (1995) and approved by the Research Ethics and Data Protection Sub-Committee in Durham University's School of Education. Participants were asked for permission to record and were informed about the intended use and purposes of the research. They were also assured that their participation was fully voluntary and that anonymity would be preserved.

The evaluation took place in two phases (Phase I took place at the beginning and Phase II at the end of the three-year period). Wherever possible, the findings from Phase II will be compared against the Phase I baseline data in order to ascertain the relative effectiveness of the RA initiative.

This paper presents the findings from this second phase of the evaluation. Data have been collected through:

- A focused interview with teachers in each of the two project schools and the comparator school.
- A focused interview with senior members of staff in each of the two project schools and the comparator school.
- Two focused interviews with pupils from the two project schools and one pupil interview at the comparator school.
- Interviews with the parents of two KS3 pupils (KS3 covers years 7, 8, 9); one in school A and one in school B.
- Questionnaires completed by the pupils that were interviewed in the three schools and by the members of staff that were interviewed in the two project schools.
- The MidYIS attitudinal questionnaire[1] administered to Year 7, 8 and 9 pupils from the three schools.
- A Learning Walk[2] in the two project schools, where a range of sessions were observed to capture evidence which demonstrates the philosophy and application of RA.
- School data from the two project schools relating to the three-year period between 2009 and 2012.

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[1] Attitudinal questionnaire administered to secondary age pupils by the Centre for Evaluation and Monitoring at Durham University that explores pupils' attitudes to school and study, including bullying and racism, the school climate, extra-curricular participation, career aspirations.

[2] Learning Walks are a very structured method of gathering evidence of progress against a clearly defined issue, and planning ways forward. The Learning Walk is collaborative in nature, it is carried out by a team of people who design the best way to gather evidence and collectively use the evidence gathered to identify areas for development. The team members are carefully chosen to reflect the needs of the project and can consist of representatives of all the stakeholders involved.

Project Outcomes

The Pupils' Perspective

This section explores the pupils' perspective, offering qualitative evidence around three key areas of change: ethos and attitudinal changes; behaviour; teaching and the climate for learning.

Ethos and Attitudinal Changes

All pupils interviewed in the two project schools reported that their teachers are fair, show respect and care for the pupils. The support offered by the teachers was perceived as being two-directional, as it catered for both the pupils' education and their emotional well-being. The following comments from two pupils, for example, reveal their pride in their academic achievements which have been facilitated by their teachers' encouragement and appropriate target setting:

> *'We have silver targets and gold targets. The silver targets are what you should be reaching and the gold targets are what you could aim for if you have already reached your silver target. And they are always encouraging you to try and reach your gold target.' (Pupil, School A)*

> *'I like the teacher support, because it helps you get higher grades. I've already reached my silver target in Science, because of Miss X and Miss Y helping me and showing me what to do and giving me the support and telling me that I can do it.' (Pupil, School A)*

Pupils also felt that teachers adequately catered for their emotional needs on two levels. On a reactive level, pupils felt supported when things went wrong. In the case of a conflict between two or more pupils, for example, the teacher would use the RA questions to allow all parties to express their side of the story and reach a mutually beneficial agreement as to the best way forward. During this approach, active listening is key. The following two examples describe the pupils' perspective of the process and effective resolution reached following an RA mediation meeting between a teacher and the individuals involved:

> *'The teachers actively listen to you - they listen to both sides of the stories… Because we talk to each other and the person who is getting bullied tells the person who is bullying them how they feel about them. …how the person, who is bullying, is making the person who is being bullied unhappy and how the person who is being bullied can resolve it by just telling someone.' (Pupil, School A)*

> *'The teachers put us in a meeting to get it sorted out. And sometimes they bring a parent in… the teachers always give you options about what you want to do. So they don't choose it for you. They are just trying to help you out.' (Pupil, School B).*

This exemplifies that an understanding of each other's perspective and the realisation of how one's actions may adversely affect others is the most important contributor to the efficient resolution of a conflict, resulting in the release of emotional tension.

'It gives you a chance to explain what is going on…and express yourself. It lets the weight off your shoulders; it's like letting all the emotions flow out. You can see the other person's views and that takes it a bit away from your troubles, because you can see that they are going through a hard time as well as you.' (Pupil, School A)

'When we do lose our temper, sometimes people can actually be scared of us… that sort of distances us from everyone else and sort of makes us even more depressed… but this restorative approach stops people losing their temper, it resolves the situation and pretty much stops a disaster from happening.' (Pupil, School A)

All pupils spoke highly about designated places at both schools where they felt they could talk openly about issues that were affecting them in a safe and highly supportive environment. In School A, for example, the following pupil experienced an enormous 'sense of relief' when the issue that was preoccupying her was resolved. School B also developed a buddy system where older pupils were trained to help younger ones when problems at school were encountered. This was welcomed by the younger pupils.

'I know I had a problem a few weeks ago. Three boys were calling me names. I was trying to ignore them and sometimes that doesn't always work. I was ignoring them and ignoring them, but I realised my temper was coming up. Usually I can control it, but I could feel myself snapping. I thought, "I can't do that", so I went to the Achievement Centre. …I think it was partly them, but partly something that was happening at home - a family member was in hospital, so I was worried about them. So I told X the story and she called the boys in and I wasn't too concerned about having the boys in because I knew I could tell them up front what is going on and why I wanted them to stop. I think with doing that the boys understood that they were taking it too far. It was getting me down. So since then, they've stopped. And this was about a month ago and they've never annoyed me since.' (Pupil, School A)

On a proactive level, extensive use of circle processes[3], especially in tutor groups, enabled the sharing of expectations around appropriate conduct as discussed in assemblies and frequent group work in class. Such practices were generally perceived as beneficial in promoting the exploration of ideas, personal emotions and the development of stronger relationships at all levels within the learning community.

In summary, the RA approach was generally preferred by pupils to the more traditional sanctioned approach because of its efficiency in dealing with conflict. Seeing each other's perspective allows the wrongdoer to understand how their actions may negatively affect others, and the person that was harmed to gain an empathic view towards the wrongdoer's intentions. Understanding each other in this way leads to a fresh and stronger relationship. This is illustrated by the following quote:

'But I'm happy that it didn't happen [he wasn't punished], because he didn't do it again and he is genuinely a nice person. I don't know what got into him. He might have been joking or

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[3] Circle Processes encourage members of a community to engage in dialogue where each person has an equal opportunity to speak and to listen (this might be regulated with use of a talking piece). Circle Processes support participants to engage in an intentional conversation having agreed guidelines for how they want to work together. An opening check-in and closing check-out support reflection and the sharing of feelings and ideas. Circle Processes encourage the building of relationships and a sense of belonging.

something. But we were fine after that. [I prefer] the opportunity to talk. ...Because detentions won't let you see each other's side of the views and it is just punishing them, but you don't really know what is going on inside of their heads. With the restorative approach it puts you into perspective and lets you be in their shoes. ...They are probably thinking "Well what am I getting punished for?" and they might not realise what they have done wrong and it's just going to wind them up and might provoke them to give you more grief.' (Pupil, School A)

Behaviour

The pupils interviewed felt that their school was a calmer school since the implementation of Restorative Approaches. In comparison to Phase I of the evaluation, it is now characterised by:

- the absence of raised voices,
- fewer distractions in class which were previously caused by a minority of pupils misbehaving, and
- a feeling of being treated fairly, as individuals do not get the blame for the bad behaviour of others.

This behavioural change and its impact on the school atmosphere is evident in the following comment:

'In lessons, everybody is quiet and they just get on with the work and there is not much silly behaviour. The lessons are calm and quiet so that you can concentrate on what you are doing.' (Pupil, School A)

Teaching and the Climate for Learning

RA has transformed the climate for learning in the Mathematics Department (School A) which is an isolated building away from the main building. The change in pupil-staff relationships in the Mathematics Department in School A is dramatic. This is partly due to changes in staffing and a change in the Head of Department who has fully adopted the Restorative Approach. Teachers now deal with their own in-class issues using RA which has led to a steep decline in the number of referrals and incidents of disruptive behaviour. A similar transformation was evidenced in School B, again within the Mathematics department, where there was a significant change in teaching and the climate for learning, evidenced through positive pupil reportage and a marked reduction in the number of behavioural incidents. The investment in circle processes and restorative conversations/enquiries, active listening skills and the subsequent development of shared empathy for both staff and pupils were seen as key to improved relationships.

Pupils in both schools were familiar with the RA themes as a means of reflecting upon their learning and their emotional well-being. A particular pupil in School B commented with pride on his reading achievements in the Explore Group (low ability group of pupils who have literacy issues) as shown in the comment that follows. Indeed, an Explore Group lesson observed during the Learning Walk revealed a highly positive working atmosphere where pupils were appropriately supported in their learning through collaborative activities and structured writing frames. Moreover, thinking skills

were encouraged, and expectations of the behaviours for learning were overtly taught and actively shared by the class within an environment that offered effective praise and support.

> *'I think my reading has got better. Since I went into the Explore, I started reading on my own and I've got way better. I usually read for a full hour then and you've got to remember the new books and what the stories are about and that gets us even better and I can tell the teachers.'* (Pupil, School B)

In addition, collaborative learning was firmly embedded in both schools and enabled the building and nurturing of relationships. Pupils were actively engaged in helping each other learn and there was evidence of a developed appreciation for others' perspectives through peer assessment, as shown in the following comment:

> *'We do peer assessment in the class, like we do pen marking… they'll mark your work and say what corrections and errors and what your next steps have to be …to improve your work.'* (Pupil, School A)

Comparator School Data - Pupil Interviews

Ethos

From interviewing the pupils in the comparator school, it emerged that there were limited opportunities for building relationships across the year groups as a result of split lunch times and the absence of whole-school gatherings. The general feeling was that the school could do more to support positive relationships across the community, although the KS4 group (KS4 covers years 10, 11) resoundingly agreed that if "there is someone that you don't get along with then you just turn away from each other, leave it alone – an unspoken agreement."

Pupils greatly value the work of a member of staff who supports issues around bullying by inviting each of the parties to meet in order to discuss the issues. Faith in the member of staff's ability to resolve issues was echoed within the group. One pupil felt the approach adopted, i.e. talking to them and letting them explain their viewpoint, was beneficial since they thought that shouting at pupils who had 'done wrong' was ineffective. Overall pupils feel staff are caring, evidenced by staff going out of their way to check that pupils are emotionally comfortable and through the provision of additional support to improve examination performance.

Behaviour

When things go wrong in class, some of the pupils felt that staff listened to their views, if approached at the end of the lesson, and that a fresh start was offered. However, there was a general consensus that staff, through virtue of their position, have an acquired authority which gives their voice precedence. Pupils felt that when other staff became involved in disciplinary matters (for example, a Head of Faculty), they were judged according to the reportage of the referring teacher and thereby not given a fair hearing. An interesting juxtaposition emerged in that whilst staff valued such support from colleagues, in that it demonstrated a united front (signalling that in challenging one member of staff

they were challenging the school), pupils perceived this as an unfair systematic approach based on one of prejudgement, which rendered their voice powerless.

When asked what could be done to improve the situation, they felt that information regarding the situation should be sought from others in class and that they should be given opportunities to give their viewpoint to prevent staff 'jumping to conclusions'. There was a general sense of unfair treatment leading to repressed anger and distress, which they felt they needed to hide to avoid further conflict. Others dealt with their suppressed emotions by absenting themselves or taking it out on other pupils.

Sanctions

Pupils feel verbal warnings are ineffective. One-to-one private corridor conversations were seen to be more effective in changing behaviour in class. It was felt that few teachers shout but when this does happen it is not taken seriously or pupils are shocked and offended by this behaviour. Moreover, detentions are not perceived to be effective in that pupils are asked to do lines or sit in silence; however, it was acknowledged that some staff talk to pupils about what happened during these sessions. When asked what they learn from detentions, pupils felt nothing was gained since staff overall failed to talk to them and they largely did not understand why they were there. However, on the occasions where staff did talk things over, greater understanding was acquired and valued.

Consistency in the application of the behaviour policy varied, especially where cover staff/supply staff were involved. Furthermore, pupils felt that inconsistencies arose due to staff "having favourites", leading to different pupils being treated differently thus generating a sense of unfairness. The pupils strongly felt that this needed to be addressed and that everyone should be given fair access to praise as a result of "trying their best efforts and for being you". The more academic members of the group felt that they were overlooked and that praise was directed at those who were working beneath target grades. When asked if they could express these views and opinions to anyone in school, members of the KS3 group felt vulnerable and were afraid of repercussions but valued their views being shared as part of the research.

Current in-house surveys, via email systems were thought to be "just about lessons", rather than about how they felt about school life and general day-to-day experiences. Some pupils felt that a regular survey for pupils and staff should be conducted so that all sides were heard.

Teaching and Learning

KS3 pupils expressed an enjoyment for active lessons – whiteboard interactive games in mathematics, 'beat the teacher' competitions and work in pairs which they felt spurred them on. However, they were uncomfortable with selected groupings since they felt unable to manage difficult group dynamics. KS4 pupils identified few opportunities to work in groups, suggesting differences in teaching pedagogies between the KS3 and KS4.

Within the classroom, pupils gained a sense of value and success from responding to questions supported through a hands-up policy and a no-hands-up policy in some lessons, which was adopted to encourage all members of the class to contribute to lessons. They also valued the considerate nature of one member of staff who, following a presentation or teacher exposition, quietly approaches pupils and

asks about their understanding of the topic on a one-to-one level. KS3 pupils felt they were encouraged to listen and were motivated through positive encouragement and a range of rewards.

Pupils' Questionnaire

Table 5 (Appendix I) presents pupils' responses in percentages to the rating-scale sections of the questionnaire that was completed either prior to the interview (for Schools A and B) or during the interview (School C). There are similarities in pupils' responses between the comparator and the project schools but also some interesting differences.

Similarities in pupils' responses across the three schools

The responses indicate a general sense of enjoyment and positive feelings about school life. Pupils care about each other and about school staff. In terms of respectful interactions, the majority of pupils were confident that they treat other pupils with respect and they felt that they are mostly treated with respect by other pupils. All pupils felt that there is always someone to help them sort out differences with friends.

Differences in pupils' responses

Responses from pupils in Schools A and B were more positive in terms of feeling that their side of the story was heard in the case of conflict and there was a slightly higher percentage reporting being treated fairly by staff.

Pupils in the project schools felt that staff care about the pupils more than pupils in the comparator school (56% thought that staff in Schools A and B care about the pupils all the time in comparison to 10% from School C). There was a larger percentage of pupils in Schools A and B who felt that they are treated with respect by teachers and other adults in the school all the time (67%) and that staff listen to their views and opinions all the time (50%). In School C, 40% of the pupils felt that staff listen to their views and opinions rarely or never.

Pupils' responses in Schools A and B in relation to expressing opinions in class, working in pairs or groups and working together to sort out problems in class were generally more positive as there were more responses in the 'All the time' column and fewer in the 'Never' column in comparison to pupils' responses in School C. However, pupils in School C reported feeling safe and comfortable at school to a larger extent (80% felt safe and comfortable all the time or often). They felt less happy about other pupils' lack of consideration when moving around the school and this was reflected in the pupil interviews.

Survey Findings

Table 6 (Appendix II) presents the findings of the attitudinal survey in percentages. Pupils from Years 7, 8 and 9 from the two project schools (School A: N=116 for Y7, N=106 for Y8, N=122 for Y9; School B: N=114 for Y7, N=104 for Y8, no data available for Y9) and the comparator school (School C: N=61 for Y7, N=12 for Y8 and N=128 for Y9) completed the MidYIS attitudinal survey and their answers to those statements that are relevant to the RA initiative are shown in the table. The numbers with the asterisk sign refer to those percentages which are significantly different, either larger (>) or smaller (<), from the total 'population' percentage, i.e. the total cohort of pupils from a number of schools around the country that have taken the survey (over 100 schools and almost 14,000 pupils). In this paper, the focus will be on those significant differences. Wherever possible, these findings will be

compared against the baseline survey that was completed by pupils from the three schools at the beginning of Phase I.

Self-esteem

Regarding those statements that are relevant to self-esteem, these pupils' self-perception is in general terms similar to the national picture. In comparison to the baseline findings, pupils' self-concept is on average slightly better for Schools A and B, and slightly worse for School C.

In particular, pupils from School C showed a lower self-perception as indicated by their responses to statements such as 'I am kind to others', 'I do most things well' and 'I like myself'. Improved attitudes for the project schools were evident in responses to statements such as 'I am proud of myself' (School B), 'I am kind to others' (School A), 'I do most things well' (School B), 'I am a nice person' (School A) and 'I like myself' (School B).

Bullying

Pupils' responses to the bullying section of the survey were particularly surprising as, in contrast to their original responses, almost all of the year groups in all schools indicated that they had been a victim or they had seen bullying on the way to or from school or during the school day. In many cases, there was a marked increase in their responses regarding bullying experiences in comparison to the baseline responses. However, more pupils now felt confident that their school would take action to protect them against bullying if it happened and would feel safe to express their worries about bullying to their teachers at school.

Racism

Responses to racism, however, were more positive and in line with the national picture (for a breakdown of where those bullying or racist incidents may have taken place compared against the national picture, see Table 7 in Appendix II).

Attitude and behaviour

There is no one particular school that stands out in terms of pupils' attitude and behaviour. Instances of responses that are statistically higher than the available national data are found in the majority of statements, often across the three schools (see Table 6, Appendix II) and, even though there are variations in comparison to the baseline survey, there is overall a similar number of significantly different percentages in responses.

In particular, almost all groups of pupils from the three schools felt that they cannot resist shouting out the answer when the teacher asks the class a question. More than half of all groups of pupils reported that they had recently refused to do what their teacher asked them to do and that they had seen someone threatened at school to a larger extent than the national picture would suggest. About half of all groups indicated that they sometimes forget what they are supposed to be doing in lessons, that they have arguments with their friends, that they had recently deliberately tried to annoy people in school or lost their temper and that they had recently been involved in a fight in school.

School climate

However, all pupils held a positive view of the school climate. More specifically, Year 9 pupils in School C felt that the teachers respected them and tried hard to help them to a larger extent compared to the national data. However, Year 8 pupils in School B felt less safe in school and they did not feel that pupils in their school like each other enough.

Understanding rights and responsibilities

The two project schools were perceived by a range of year groups as taking notice of the opinions of their pupils and making them aware of their rights as individuals to a larger extent compared to the national picture. Year 9 responses in the comparator school revealed pupils' perception that their school takes trouble to find out what its pupils think about important issues.

Project Outcomes

From the Teachers' and Whole-School Perspective

This section explores the teachers' perspective, offering qualitative and quantitative evidence around three key areas of change: ethos and attitudinal changes, attendance and behaviour, teaching and the climate for learning.

Ethos and Attitudinal Changes

Members of staff in both the project schools speak of a calmer school, where staff and pupils collaborate to ensure that the best outcomes for all concerned are achieved. There is a sense of unity and staff feel valued. There is no sense of hierarchy, hence teachers and support staff alike feel they are equally valued and able to discuss issues with senior members of staff without fear of judgement. The Learning Walk evidenced a very positive climate inside and outside the school.

Compared to the period before the implementation of RA, there was a consensus that a much calmer atmosphere exists in both schools, evidenced in the lack of raised voices and in the more respectful interactions that are now commonplace across departments.

> *'There was a lot of raised voices. As somebody who wanders around the school during the day a lot, there was always an awful lot of raised voices. There is less and less of that now. It's not very often that you hear that now. And sometimes it takes you by surprise as you're walking past a classroom, where it used to be an everyday occurrence at one point.' (Teacher, School A)*

> *'Things have become calmer... I enjoy coming to work and I enjoy my classes'. (Teacher, School B)*

In particular, the Mathematics departments in both project schools have seen a massive improvement in pupils' attitude and benefited greatly from an improved ethos within the department. Staff and the Head of Department in School B are investing in circle processes and restorative conversations to enhance the climate for learning. Active listening skills and the subsequent development of shared empathy for both staff and pupils is seen as key to improved relationships. Time given to exploring ways of working together resulted in a long term solution and improved work ethos. As the Head of Mathematics in School A mentions in the comment that follows, he is no longer 'firefighting' which has made his job easier.

> *'I started in 2008 and we dug out some data for the number of incident sheets and, when I first started, on average every half term there were a hundred and fifty incidents in Maths. So if you think of a six week half term that is 25 a week. I just felt, as a Head of Department, that I was firefighting all the time. I was going into classes to tell kids off... But now, if I go into classes, it is to see how well they are doing. There is a lovely atmosphere in the class...' (Senior Teacher, School A)*

This positive impact has been facilitated by a key focus on active listening throughout the school, by a more conscious attempt by teachers and pupils to think about various situations 'more deeply' and by the sustained use of connection activities, such as circle time. This has resulted in better relationships between teachers and pupils as better communication led to the development of an empathic rapport characterised by more openness, trust and honesty. During the Learning Walk, a Year 7 form tutor

session was observed. The circle activities that took place were seen to enhance positive relationships and group cohesion through nurturing a greater understanding of others within the group and create a sense of fun whilst discreetly supporting the development of literacy skills alongside those of emotional literacy. As a direct outcome pupils were more comfortable and able to talk about their thoughts and feelings.

The frequent use of the restorative question 'What has happened?' instead of asking 'What did you do?' combined with a readiness in allowing both parties to voice their viewpoint helped change the school culture from one of 'blame' to one of dialogue and discussion. This more democratic use of language, together with the realisation that incidents can be dealt with much more efficiently through the RA process, gradually led to a change in pupils' and teachers' attitudes. Compared to when RA was first implemented, 70% of staff members (compared to a baseline percentage of 22.5%) reported that they always or usually invited pupils to think about what their own needs were for closure and repair after an incident. Moreover, the majority of pupils started taking responsibility for their own behaviour thinking about what consequences their actions might have on other people, as the following quote illustrates:

> *'The restorative approach is best, because then maybe the person doesn't understand you that much… knowing that they are hurting you more… helps them to understand you more and you to understand them.' (Pupil, School A)*

Interestingly, some teachers felt that pupils had started being more independent in their ability to sort out their disagreements among themselves or even to use the RA principles at home:

> *'I think they have a tendency now to do it in their own groups, especially as they are getting older. And it is just a tool for them to stop these falling outs… even with their parents'. (Teacher, School B).*

As a result, both pupils and teachers are now happier in school and it is sometimes the case that pupils ask for the restorative meetings themselves at an early stage before any negative situations escalate. Likewise, teachers are also keen to have a restorative meeting when there are situations that need to be resolved. This helps them to achieve a fuller understanding of the issues leading to a fresh start in the relationship.

Overall, there was a general feeling that RA was now firmly embedded within the school culture, evidenced in the consistency with which RA was implemented throughout the two schools. For this reason, it was felt that it was now 'second nature' and that it would be sustainable in the long term.

> *'It works in small ways that we don't even notice. I think it is so ingrained now, especially with the year leaders and the pastoral staff, that we don't even think about the way that we have those conversations, and that, for me, is a huge, huge success – that it is second nature now.' (Senior Teacher, School B)*

> *'And I don't think it is a conscious thing that we are restorative now. It's kind of embedded in the culture. So it's not that we must have a restorative meeting to resolve this issue, it is a case of, right, we need to sit down with this pupil. It's kind of like learning to drive - suddenly it just clicks – and I think that's what it is and that's why it is part of the culture now and new staff pick up on that. It's just embedded in the culture now, I think.' (Senior Teacher, School A)*

Last but not least, there is emerging evidence that the schools' RA practices are beginning to impact upon life outside of school. On the one hand, there is evidence of strong parental involvement as part of the restorative philosophy adopted within the schools and on the other some RA-related links had started to be developed between the school and the wider community. School staff in both schools

were proud to talk about the strong links they had developed with parents who were either present at restorative meetings or were frequently informed about the outcome of meetings that involved their children. The two parents that were interviewed were full of praise for the RA initiative and its effectiveness and they felt that it was the teachers' enthusiasm and the senior leadership teams' support that were the key contributors to its success. In both cases, the problematical situation was successfully resolved after a single restorative meeting.

> *'As that meeting progressed, I realised afterwards that [the traditional punitive approach] was the wrong approach, because had I got my way, and this individual had been punished, he would have been full of resentment. And that resentment would only have been channelled back to my daughter. So the fact that there's never been any other issue with this boy speaks volumes. Because I think that if he had been punished in the old style, he might well have then come back and done something else to her, or created other problems for her. And he didn't. So, for me, that just screams volumes that as a process it is incredibly effective.' (Parent, School A)*

> *'Just how important it was for my daughter and her friends, because I felt that, at the time, if something hadn't come along, like a miracle, I could have easily had my daughter staying at home. You know, going into it, she has never been confident, and to look at her where she is now is fabulous… It was from when that meeting was done and the girls were able to sort things out and stay friends.' (Parent, School B)*

The following quote illustrates the effective resolution of an incident between a pupil and a member of the community:

> *'The biggest one for me was doing one with a member of the public. One of our children had thrown some stones and things at her car, throwing them across the road at each other while they were walking home, again, being silly. She was in her seventies and she was really, really upset about it. She said, "Can I have a meeting with the parents and this boy?". And I said, "Well, we're a restorative school actually and I'll ask the parents if that is OK." And it was absolutely fabulous. She came in. She explained to the parents, "I'm seventy-odd years old. I could have had a heart attack." And the boy was in as well. And instead of her wanting the payment for it and she was really quite angry, it ended up with her saying "I know you can't afford to pay for this, I don't want you to pay for any damage, I just want your son to know that he need not do this again." And it hasn't happened since. And she was someone who doesn't have anybody in the school at all and she rang afterwards and just said, "Can I say thank you very much. I feel so much better for being able to come in and get my feelings out." And that was really lovely.' (Senior Teacher, School A)*

Attendance

Attendance is better in both schools and, in the academic year 2010-11, it had exceeded the national average by 0.8% as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Whole School Attendance (School A and School B)
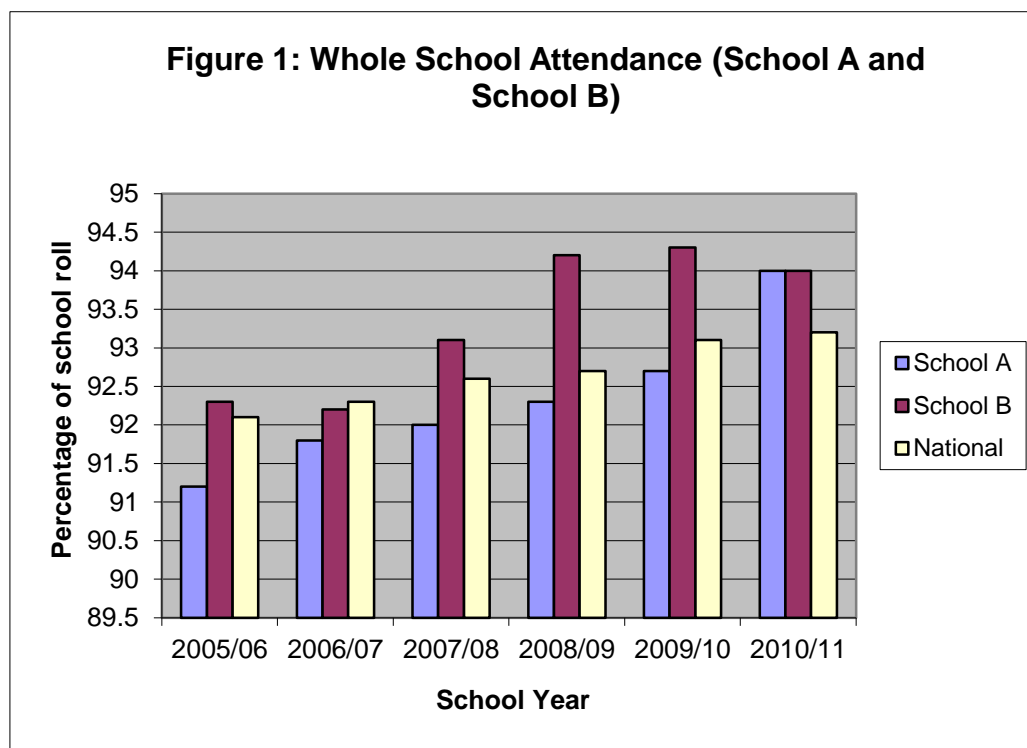
In attempting to tackle problems with attendance in School A, in particular, Higher Level Teaching Assistants (HLTAs) were attached to Years 8, 9 and 10, with the Assistant Head Teacher and the mentors working with Years 7 and 11. As the following comment by the Assistant Head demonstrates, they worked restoratively with children who were falling into a persistent absentee grouping which resulted in significant improvements in terms of the attendance of these individuals and the school's overall performance, which was held to be "the best it has ever been".

> *'But instead of the old system, where I'd just get the kids in and say that you haven't been in school, get yourself here etc., that has all changed now. So we identify the children who are falling into a persistent absentee group, the children who are just above it and the HLTAs use the restorative way of speaking to them. So they will get them together to ask what is happening that they don't want to come to school. And it sounds something really simple, and you think "Why didn't we do that before?", but I think that people are so busy. So it is about devolving what you do as well, and instead of trying to do everything yourself, actually realising, for me, that other people can do it better than I can. And they can and they are really, really good at it. And the children ask "What's my attendance now Miss?" Great! They want to know. And it is kind of up and down, because it can depend on year groups, but the overall trend is that whole school attendance is going up and there is a drop in the persistent absentee rate. And I think we can demonstrate that the HLTA work had made a difference.' (Assisstant Head, School A)*

Table 1 shows attendance figures for each of the three years groups (Years 7, 8 and across three academic years in School A. There is a general upward trend for all year groups apart from Year 8 pupils whose attendance improved one year later (in 2010-11) but declined slightly the following year. Similarly, the attendance for Year 7 pupils saw a big improvement for the first year but declined in Year 9. Overall though attendance figures in the third year are all higher than in the first year of HLTA intervention in School A.

Attendance Data with HTLA Intervention		
2009-10	**2010-11**	**2011-12**
Year 7	Year 8	Year 9
92.7	95.1	93.6
Year 8	Year 9	Year 10
90.7	93.2	92.8
Year 9	Year 10	Year 11
89.7	92.5	94.6

Table 1: Attendance data with HLTA intervention showing change in attendance for Years 7, 8 and 9 across three academic years

Behaviour

School staff reported seeing a big improvement in pupils' behaviour since the implementation of RA in their schools in that there was a noticeably calmer atmosphere inside and outside the classroom and behaviour incidents were perceived to be dealt with much more efficiently within a short space of time.

> *'I…teach some challenging classes with lots of boys…but because they've got this cooperative relationship, then we can work better and there are less issues and if someone has done something silly it is dealt with in the class and sorted, rather than letting it fester.' (Teacher, School A)*

> *'You can see when you move around the classroom, we don't have the kids outside the classrooms anymore, when you go in it is calmer…' (Senior Teacher, School B)*

> *'But for the majority of staff I think they have seen the overwhelming benefits of it and now situations don't get escalated nowhere near as much as they originally were.' (Teacher, School B)*

Pupils' better behaviour has been the result of improved pupil-teacher and pupil-pupil relationships. Teachers and other members of staff take the time and provide a safe environment for pupils to discuss their perspective on what happened and how it led to a conflict or disruptive situation. Pupils feel listened to and they are comfortable to share their points-of-view. This has led to a change in pupils' attitude and has created more open, honest and respectful interactions, where pupils are at ease in working cooperatively with one another.

> *'I thought that that's the way that I dealt with behaviour anyway and, from the Head of Department's point of view, I wanted to have a calmer environment in the department, where there was this sort of mutual respect… It has made huge improvements in terms of behaviour and pupil/staff relationships. It's been excellent.' (Senior Teacher, School A)*

'I still deal with incidents on the buses and my first question is "what happened'... before the restorative approach I wouldn't have done that. The question wouldn't have been as open. And also in dealing with issues, a lot of staff use the restorative approach of getting pupils together or speaking with the pupil personally. I think pupils' interaction with each other is a lot more respectful. I think their interactions with teachers are a lot more respectful. There is just a general calmness about the school and I think the restorative approach has helped significantly with that.' (Teacher, School B)

'Our pupils are comfortable now in how they are being approached by staff, how they can approach staff, how situations are being approached... It is the fact that they know that they are going to be heard and they are given that opportunity.' (Teacher, School B)

School staff also felt that pupils have started developing more ownership in their relationships as, on the one hand, they think more about the consequences that their actions might have on other people and, on the other, they seem to be using RA to resolve issues within their friendship groups, without necessarily resorting to the teacher for help.

'I think kids now use it within their own friendship groups. So they don't have to keep running to us and saying that they have fallen out with so and so, because they understand that what they say is affecting the other person.' (Teacher, School B)

Particular benefits were observed with some vulnerable pupils with behavioural and socio-emotional difficulties. By being actively listened to and developing the language to express their emotions, RA gave some of these children an avenue to share their feelings and be engaged in discussions instead of being repeatedly excluded from school.

'The restorative approach has given us a new way. When I was on the training, I thought that this will never work for [some of the pupils]... To see them engaging in restorative approach discussions with teachers, where formerly it would have just been a high clash that resulted in an exclusion, that's where I have seen the real impact... So to be making inroads with that group is a massive turn around.' (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator, School A)

Indeed, observation of circle work with a group of vulnerable pupils during the Learning Walk showed that they were at ease with each other and contributed positively to the activities. The group identified the value of circles in that they felt valued, gained confidence and they felt that they had become more resilient since the group work was seen to support them in their ability to cope with issues in and outside of class. A sense of worth and group cohesion was evidenced. The following example demonstrates how group work and circle time helped an autistic child to deal with some difficult issues:

'I think that the work that has happened with X in that form class – he's autistic – is massive. [All his temper, violence] is now gone. ...he is the kind of kid that when somebody stood on a spider in the yard he just became hysterically upset – they'd murdered it. .... So some of the kids would deliberately stand on one. But the form class worked with him and they sat down and they looked together at those issues.' (Senior Teacher, School A)

Staff emphasised that in their schools they required the restorative approach to run alongside the modified behaviour approach. Sanctions and exclusions have still been necessary as an alternative if the restorative approach was unsuccessful. Similarly, detentions still exist, but their purpose is different.

Most staff now use detentions to talk restoratively to the pupils and actively listen to the issues which led to problems in a particular lesson. The role of detentions, therefore, becomes restorative rather than punitive:

> *'So instead of the detention being the old system… detention is now being used as an opportunity to explore and explain.' (Teacher, School A)*

Exclusions

Table 2 and Figures 2 and 3 (see also Table 8 in Appendix III) present exclusion data for the two schools and show the trends in exclusions across four academic years (2008-2012; data for 2007-08 for school B is also available). Overall, there is a significant drop in exclusions (fixed-term, number of exclusions and number of days lost due to exclusion) for both schools between 2008-09 and 2011-12 with slight upward and downward fluctuations for the years in between. There has been a 51% drop in the number of exclusions since 2008-09 for School A and a 67% drop for School B. The Mathematics department in School A, in particular, saw a very large decline in the number of incidents as Table 3 shows (85% reduction in the number of incidents per year since 2008-09 and 75% reduction in the average number of incidents per half term).

Exclusions								
	2008-09		**2009-10**		**2010-11**		**2011-12**	
	Fixed	Permanent	Fixed	Permanent	Fixed	Permanent	Fixed	Permanent
School A	123	2	59	4	84	3	60	1
School B	42	1	36	3	31	3	14	1

Table 2: Exclusion data across four academic years (Schools A and B)

Figure 2: Trends in Exclusions for Schools A and B (Number of Exclusions)

Figure 3: Trends in Exclusions for Schools A and B (Number of Days)
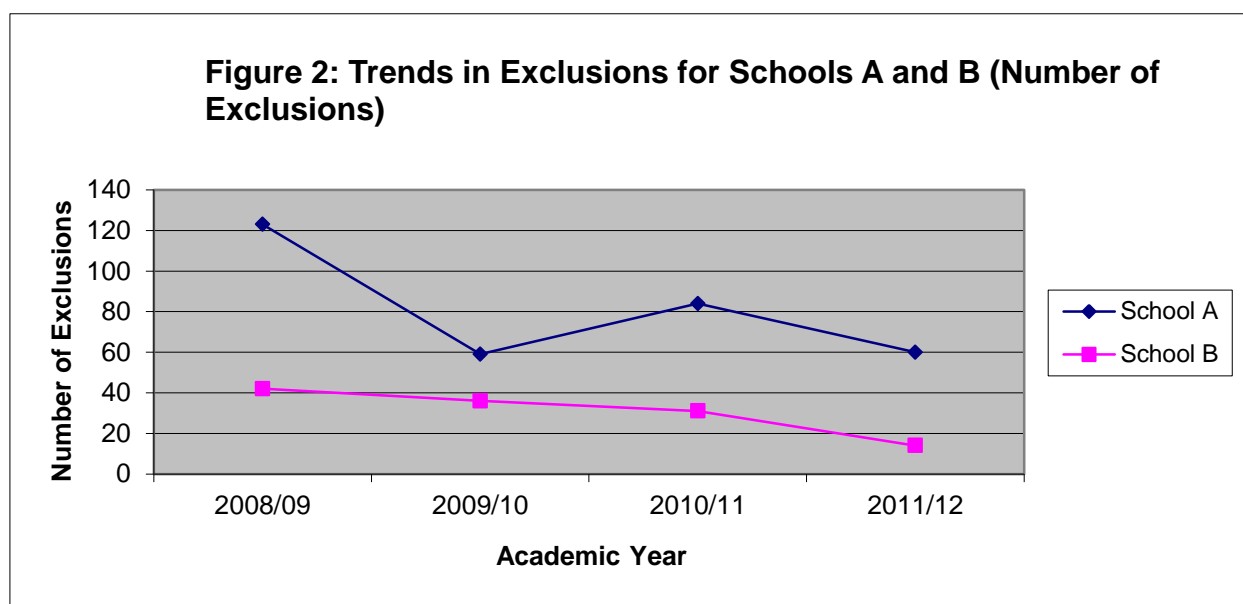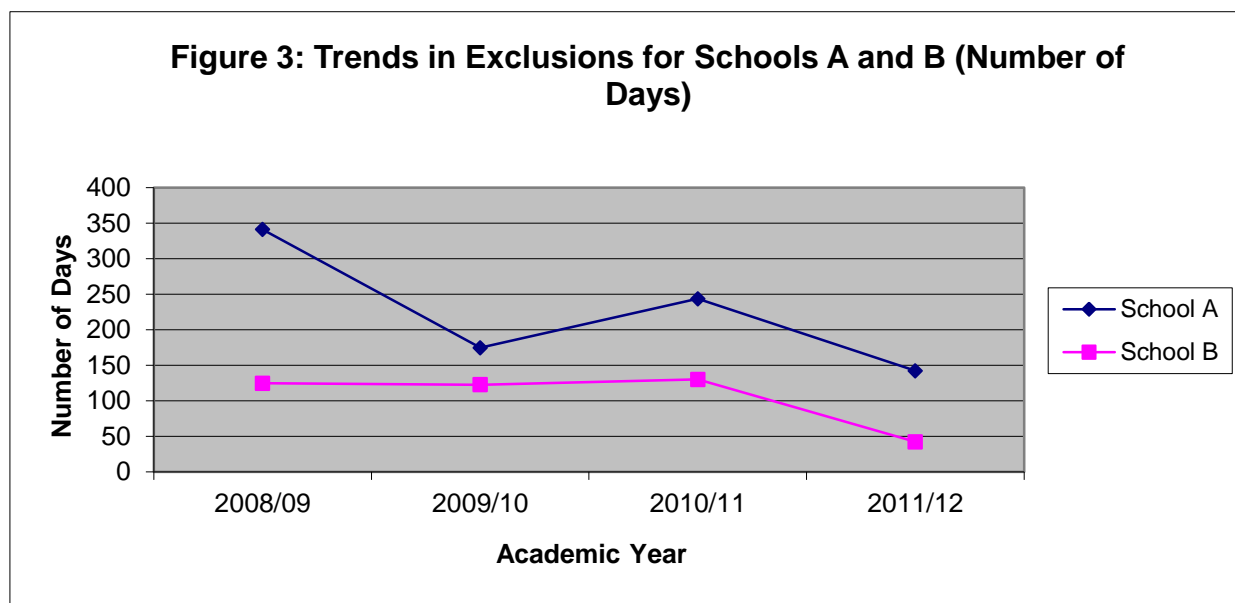
Mathematics Behaviour Data				
	2008/2009	**2009/2010**	**2010/2011**	**2011-Present**
Total Number of Incidents (Year)	998	574	504	152
Average Number of Incidents (Half-term)	150	96	84	38

Table 3: Number of incidents (per year and half-term) in Mathematics (School A)

Referrals and Detentions

In relation to on-site referrals for intervention, there has been a drop in the number of pupils referred or re-referred in School A (Table 4) from 2009-10 to 2010-11. In School B, the number of pupils referred on-site for intervention has overall increased from 138 in 2008-09 to 231 in 2011- 12 (Figure 4). The increased number in referrals can be explained by the change in function of the on-site referrals in School B. Since the implementation of RA, out of class referrals are used as an intervention strategy where pupils are given the opportunity to engage in restorative conversations and subsequent interventions.

Inclusion Data (On-Site)			
	Pupils	**Re-referred**	**% Re-referred**
2009/2010	119	29	24.3
2010/2011	86	17	19.7

Table 4: On-site referrals for intervention data: School A

As far as detentions are concerned, the data available for School B are presented in Figure 5. Years 2009-10 and 2011-12 have seen a reduction in the number of detentions and after-school detentions (ASDs) compared to the previous academic year. As explained by the RA co-ordinator in School B, year 2010-11 was a 'blip' year, "people do slip back into the ways of detentions sometimes and we've got to keep pushing it all the time". However, the detentions are often used to work through the incident restoratively. RA reflection sheets are used with pupils as an aid to inform personal reflection. Depending on the outcomes on the reflective sheet, restorative conversations may then be held to unpick issues if required.

Figure 5: Number of detentions and after-school detentions for School B
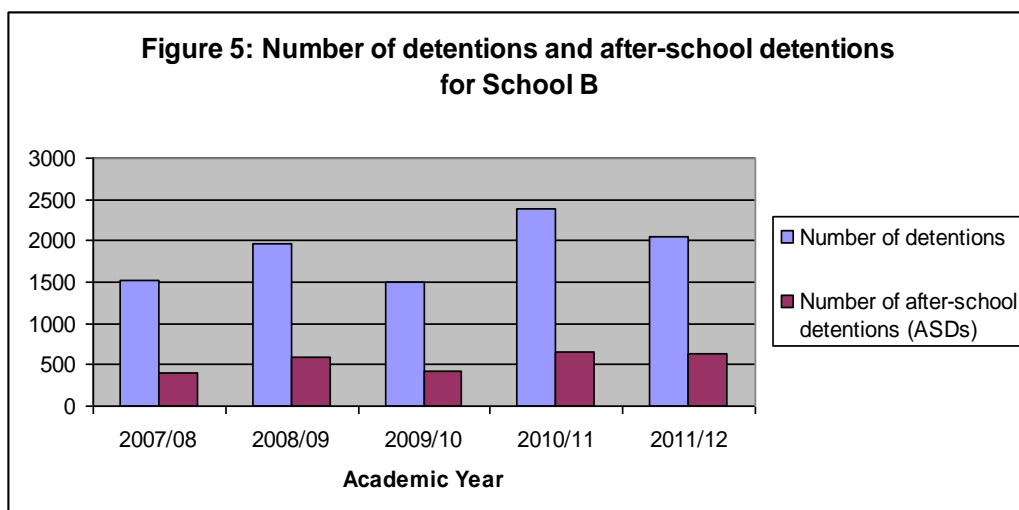
Teaching and the Climate for Learning

Improved pupil behaviour, reflecting a greater regard for others' thoughts and feelings, created in many cases a calmer atmosphere within the classroom, where pupils felt safe to contribute to classroom discussion without the fear of 'being ridiculed'.

> ' You're seeing kids putting their hand up all the time to answer the question… They feel that they're not going to get laughed at or ridiculed for getting something right or wrong – they're not going to get called a swot.' (Teacher, School B)

The RA questions are frequently used in lessons and are often incorporated in lesson planning to provide links with the restorative values. Using the RA questions in lessons was first trialled in Science, English and Geography in School A and then fed through to all of the staff as part of their teaching and learning development work. It was felt that this was successful as the use of the RA open-ended questions enhanced pupils' reflective skills and engagement in the lesson.

> 'They used that word themselves – active listening. …they all said that they felt really comfortable within a classroom and I think that's where it comes from – this ability to understand that the teacher is actively listening to you, that they are using those open-ended questions, and that they are actually interested in your thoughts.' (Senior Teacher, School A)

The application of RA themes was evidenced during the Learning Walk in the two schools in the following observations made about subject specific lessons:

Science Lesson: The teacher modelled the RA themes as a means of sharing his perception of the learning. Pupils also demonstrated familiarity with the RA themes through engagement in activities designed to aid self-assessment of their learning and emotional well-being. Post-it notes were used to establish current feelings and needs to secure movement up the emotional scale, in terms of positive emotions. Pupil and staff relationships with the topic, their personal learning and that of others were therefore overtly explored through this activity (School A).

Mathematics Lesson: RA themes and questions were used to aid reflection of learning as part of the plenary. An aid to this approach featured on the wall for reference purposes. A potentially challenging group of less able Year 8 boys had been transformed through the positive relationships fostered between pupils-pupils and pupils-staff. Consequently the climate for learning was calm and balanced. Pupils felt secure and willing to share ideas in class and responded well to constructive challenge from the teacher. The member of staff was also a key mentor for one of the more challenging pupils present in the class. The robust nature of this relationship was evident in the quality of the interactions between staff and pupil (School A).

English Lesson: An English lesson was observed in School B. Pupils were grouped to enable mixed gender collaborative learning. The lesson featured RA themes 2 and 3. Pupils were asked to take on the persona of characters from a novel read in class. They were then invited to explore their character's perspectives, thoughts and feelings and consider who had been affected within given scenarios. An active approach to sharing collective viewpoints of key episodes and the development of characters within the novel were successfully explored through this approach. All pupils were fully engaged and enthusiastic. Mixed gender groupings were evident, suggesting relationships were sound. The teacher modelled the sharing of thoughts and feelings and who was affected through a personal sharing. This reinforced the topic discussed in class and led to greater empathy (School B).

Science Lesson: Self chosen groups led to a general gender split but supported the delivery of a sensitive topic and therefore reflected the emotional intelligence of the member of staff. This was further endorsed through the member of staff's interactions with individual groups as a means of providing a more sensitive approach to discussing key contraceptive methods. Collaborative learning was evident throughout the lesson. The classroom climate was very positive and stimulating (School B).

Attainment Data

Figure 6 shows GCSE attainment data for the two project schools compared to the national average. Even though attainment fell slightly in 2010 for school B, the percentage of pupils achieving 5 or more GCSEs at grades A* to C including English and Mathematics increased between 2009 and 2012 in both schools and exceeded the national average in 2012.

Figure 6: Percentage of pupils achieving 5 or more GCSEs at grades A* to C in English and Mathematics
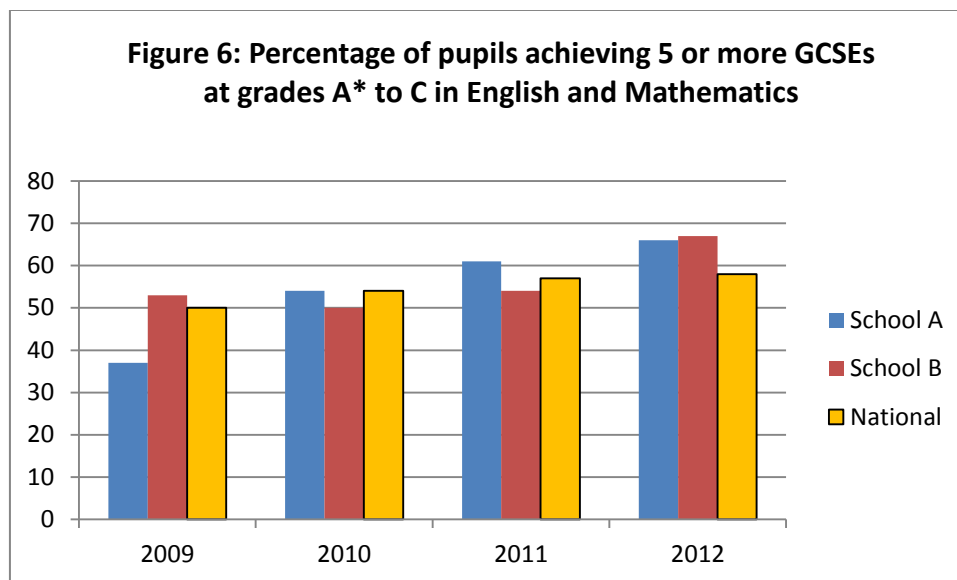
Facilitating Factors in the Implementation of RA

Enabling operational structures

Teachers interviewed in the two project schools felt well-supported by senior members of staff. This was perceived as a key contributor to the successful implementation of RA. In particular, the engagement of the Head Teacher in encouraging such an approach has been instrumental in maintaining momentum and levels of commitment.

> *'I think that if you are putting in a new initiative, whatever it is, it's got to be supported right from the top, because then if things go wrong at least you know that you've got the support and that this is the message that is being sent to everybody else … I think it was really important to have the Head there, because then that gave the direction for everyone else. The mind-set is that if the Head has been on that training, then it must be important. And if the Head is standing up and saying this is what we are going to do, this is how we're going to do it and I want you take this on board and get involved, and then it flows from there, doesn't it?'. (Teacher, School B)*

The majority of staff in the two project schools readily adopted a Restorative Approach, safe in the knowledge that they had the support of the leadership team and frequent opportunities for professional development (CPD).

> *'It took a while, but that is why we implemented CPD sessions, where the original five of us ran the sessions and taught the staff, which was quite a hard thing to do. But we had quite a lot of staff that were open-minded. We still had the odd one or two who kind of attended but weren't quite there. But I think the fact that we have been persistent and we have continued with it within CPD and that we have sent more staff on the training, a lot of staff have come round to that way of thinking.' (Teacher, School B)*

Most importantly, the staff in School A identified that the development of a whole-school approach broke down the divide between academic and pastoral staff, creating greater consistency in approach and a sense of collective responsibility for meeting the needs of the pupils. Lunch supervisors were also on board in both schools, contributing actively to the whole-school approach adopted.

> *'Now I think, because it is seen as a whole-school approach, there is not that divide anymore. I feel that the whole school has taken on this role. I mean, it has actually alleviated a lot of what I do, because it was, "Oh there is an issue, and we'll send them there [the Achievement Centre]". But it is dealt with whole-school now and the kids know that yes, this is a good place to come to, but there is also my form tutor, there is also my RE teacher... Everybody is there to support and to help.' (Teacher, School A)*

Staff from both schools felt that RA provided the essential framework which embraced and enriched on-going whole-school initiatives such as SEAL[4] (Social and Emotional Aspects of

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[4] SEAL (Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning) is "a comprehensive, whole-school approach to promoting the social and emotional skills that underpin effective learning, positive behaviour, regular attendance, staff effectiveness and the emotional health and well-being of all who learn and work in schools" (DCSF, 2007, p.4).

Learning), RRSA[5] (Rights Respecting Schools Approach), Pupil Voice[6], the Student Council[7] and the Olympic Values[8]. This infused approach has supported the realisation of transforming the project schools into calmer places characterised by better communication, improved relationships and a more respectful climate.

> *'One of our jobs at that time was to get SEAL embedded across the curriculum, so that people could see that the SEAL and the RA were pulling everything together. And nothing works in isolation. You couldn't have RA working well in a school if you didn't have the support of the teachers, if you didn't have the sort of SEAL based activities. ...So I think RA was the driver to push the rest along that same route, and I don't think that it would have accelerated as quickly without.' (Senior Teacher, School A)*

> *'We have done a lot on the RRSA – Rights Respecting Schools Approach – it has been a massive project. And I think the RA probably lends itself into that a lot. We've got level one and we're going for level two. I think again, doing the mutual respect ties in with the restorative approach. And I think that just the school's culture of openness, you can look at all these things – Restorative Approaches, Pupil Voice, Student Council, Rights Respecting Schools Approach – and they all tie into this openness; that we do listen to the pupils.' (Teacher, School B)*

Constraining Factors in the Implementation of RA

The significant challenges encountered by the project schools, emerged from: a) Resistance to new ways of working from a minority of staff and pupils; b) Fluctuating priorities and changes in leadership; c) Misconceptions and lack of understanding about the philosophy and practice as a result of stepped implementation, and d) A perceived skills deficit in terms of the ability of some pupils to identify and express their thoughts and feelings to engage in restorative reflection.

The difficulty in getting all staff on board initially was particularly mentioned in the interviews as a result of reservations about the process and associated time allowances. However, many of those members of staff then took it on board and helped create an open-door environment where pupils feel welcomed and are all proud of the improved relationships within the school.

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[5] RRSA (Rights Respecting Schools Approach) is an initiative run by UNICEF UK, which encourages schools to place the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child at the heart of its ethos and curriculum.

[6] The idea of 'Pupil Voice' is to increase the influence of pupils in the provision of their own education by ensuring that their views are included when schools make key decisions.

[7] A group of pupils at a school or college elected by their fellow pupils to represent them in school government.

[8] The values of friendship, respect, inspiration and determination promoted on a whole-school level.

In addition, staff turnover and changes in the senior leadership team made sustaining the momentum of long-term implementation particularly challenging. As one teacher in School B commented: 'I think the three year project is a huge ask because of staff turnover and the priorities of the senior team change as the senior team changes'.

The need to focus on emotional literacy was identified early, following initial training on RA. It was felt by some members of staff that the majority of pupils in the school struggled to identify and talk about their feelings. Developing emotional literacy became a key priority, allowing pupils to acquire a richer vocabulary in order to express a range and variety of emotions.

> *'We've implemented the emotional literacy. That was a big focus... So I know English changed their remit around emotional literacy. I know in the Explore curriculum, they changed their way of looking at things like that, giving pupils the opportunity to look at ways to express themselves in an appropriate way. But that was a big issue and I think that's what we had to implement quite quickly and almost immediately from deciding that we were doing it.' (Teacher, School B)*

A similar challenge was encountered with the older Key Stage 4 children, who found it particularly hard to interact with a teacher on an emotional level in terms of recognising emotions, talking about them and empathising with the teacher's feelings, as the following extract illustrates:

'(When we asked the older children and particularly the older boys) "How do you feel?" at first it was like " You what? Nobody has ever asked me that in my life before" and we had absolute shock from them that somebody wants to know how they feel. Because a lot of the time they didn't recognise it themselves – they didn't know how they were feeling. Angry outbursts, but they couldn't explain what was going on inside. So I think, from their point of view, to question themselves, like I say, it takes time. It is something new we've introduced, but we get there.' (Teacher, School A)

It was felt that RA was less successful with pupils who had been admitted to the school late in their school career following a permanent exclusion. It was considered that these pupils, who have no understanding of and no experience of the RA ethos, found it hard to break away from their 'formed habits'. Whilst, some staff held the view that some pupils simply lacked the maturity to be able to see other people's perspectives and reach a 'mutual agreement' to resolve a conflict.

'Children who have come into our school, say in Year 10, who have been permanently excluded from another school, they come into our school and they have just given up. We try the restorative approach with them, and sometimes it doesn't work, because they're so far down that road at fifteen that they can't see the light at the end of the tunnel and they are entrenched. They've made their minds up that they don't like education…' (Assistant Headteacher, School A)

A key point of interest is that the issue of the time involved in conducting restorative interventions, which had been identified as a possible challenge in the initial baseline interviews, is no longer a concern. Since the majority of restorative meetings are effective in preventing the re-occurrence of the conflict and in supporting a mutually agreed resolution, it is considered that the investment in time is worthwhile. This is illustrated in the following comment:

'I think I've only filled in about three incident sheets this year, because you're able to deal with a situation quickly and it is resolved, whereas you'd send a kid out and they would come back in and the situation would still go on. You can solve it quite quickly so there is no need.' (Teacher, School A)

Conclusions and Discussion

The evaluation of the implementation of RA revealed significant outcomes for the two project schools in the areas of ethos, attitudinal and behavioural changes, teaching and the climate for learning. Both schools are characterised by a climate of care where relationships are respectful, fair and conducive to a comfortable, cooperative and engaging learning environment. Pupils and teachers spoke of a calmer school where there is respect, absence of raised voices and fewer distractions in class. The five key questions, which constitute the RA learning framework, were effectively used as a means of helping pupils reflect upon their learning and emotional well-being. There was also a developed appreciation for others' perspective cultivated through the application of the RA framework, peer assessment and collaborative work. Particular benefits were observed with some vulnerable pupils with behavioural and socio-emotional difficulties. This positive impact has been facilitated by a key focus on active listening throughout the school, by a more conscious attempt by some pupils and teachers to think about various situations 'more deeply' and by the sustained use of connecting activities, such as circle time. As a result, pupils' relationships with the school, subject areas and with other pupils were enhanced. In addition, fresh approaches in support of metacognition resulted in higher levels of participation and engagement.

Improved attendance and the significant drop in exclusions for both schools between 2008-09 and 2011-12 indicate a clear long-term improvement in behaviour and attitudes to school. What is key to this success is the empowerment of participants, who are actively involved in the resolution of conflict and the decision making process, in contrast to more traditional punitive methods (Buckley & Maxwell, 2007). In line with the RA literature, all pupils and staff members in both schools expressed a sense of pride for their school community as they felt empowered through the RA philosophy and processes to transform conflict into cooperative relationships.

Initial concerns in terms of the time involved in engaging in restorative conversations and interventions have proved to be unfounded in that practitioners, at a later point in their implementation, retracted this view point in favour of the belief that the time spent is a worthwhile investment since long-term solutions are achieved in most cases. Further, practitioners expressed the view that as familiarity of the RA language and processes developed across the school, RA conversations became more proficient and thereby less time consuming.

A surprising finding was pupils' responses to the bullying section of the MidYIS survey[9]. In contrast to their original responses, almost all of the year groups in all schools indicated that they had been a victim or they had seen bullying on the way to or from school or during the school day to a larger extent, in comparison to the baseline responses. However, this increase in responses regarding bullying experiences could be an indication of pupils feeling more comfortable to disclose this information to school staff. Indeed, as additional responses indicated, more pupils feel safe to express their worries about bullying to their teachers and are now more confident that their school would take action to protect them against bullying. This seems to offer further validation of the observation that a heightened regard for the well-being of others is active in the learning communities.

Although the significance and value of RA in transforming the school ethos, attitudes and learning culture in both schools is clearly evidenced in the evaluation findings, it is not possible to identify RA as the sole contributor to these positive school changes, and, therefore, a causal link cannot be

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[9] Attitudinal questionnaire administered to secondary age pupils by the Centre for Evaluation and Monitoring at Durham University that explores pupils' attitudes to school and study, including bullying and racism, the school climate, extra-curricular participation, career aspirations.

ascertained. RA worked alongside a range of other initiatives (such as SEAL, RRSA, Pupil Voice, Student Council, Olympic Values) that contributed to an infused approach to school transformation. However, in contrast to the comparator school that had not experienced the restorative philosophy and practice, positive findings were observed in the two project schools in the following areas: they encouraged pupils' voice and personal perspective to be heard through active listening, ensured that the harm inflicted upon individuals and groups of pupils through conflict was restored, generally offered pupils more opportunities for building positive relationships across the community by endorsing a range of connecting activities and encouraged caring and respectful interactions to a larger extent in relation to the comparator school.

On the basis of the evaluation findings, the following recommendations for future implementation can be made:

- Whole-school training on RA, for both pastoral and academic members of staff, should take place at the very start of the RA implementation.
- Regular communication within and among different departments needs to take place to share good practice and celebrate success.
- Staff should be encouraged to use restorative conversations whenever possible as an alternative to fixed-term exclusions.
- Traditional sanctions should be used as a measure of last resort when attempts to solve problems restoratively fail to work.
- Visual information such as posters and pictures, need to be more prominent to inform visitors and act as a constant reminder to pupils and teachers of the school's restorative ethos and values.
- A greater understanding of the needs of those staff and pupils who are unwilling or unable to engage in the RA process is required to enhance whole-school practice.

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Table 5: Pupils' responses to the questionnaire completed prior to (Schools A & B) or during (School C) their interview

	School A&B (N=18)					School C (N=10)				
	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	All the Time	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	All the Time
Pupils enjoy coming to this school								40%	50%	10%
In this school pupils care about each other		6%	45%	45%	6%		20%	30%	50%	
In this school pupils care about staff		22%	45%	28%	6%		10%	50%	30%	10%
In this school staff care about the pupils		6%	22%	16%	55.5%			20%	60%	10%
I feel safe and comfortable in school		6%	33%	39%	22%			20%	20%	60%
Pupils are considerate of others when moving around the school						10%	40%	10%	30%	10%
I treat other pupils with respect			22%	45%	33%				50%	50%
I am treated with respect by other pupils			56%	45%			20%	30%	30%	20%
I am treated with respect by teachers and other adults in the school			16%	16%	67%		20%	10%	40%	30%
Staff listen to my views and opinions			33%	16%	50%	10%	30%	10%	20%	30%
If I get into trouble staff listen to my side of the story			16%	50%	33%		20%	40%	30%	10%
If I do something wrong staff treat me fairly			16%	16%	45%		10%	30%	30%	30%
If I fall out with my friends there is someone who can help us sort it out		6%	6%	33%	56%		10%	10%	20%	60%
How successful are pupils in supporting a positive working climate within classrooms?							30%	40%	30%	
In lessons how often are you given the opportunity to:										
• Express your opinions		16%	16%	45%	22%	10%	30%	30%	30%	
• Work in pairs		22%	28%	33%	16%		20%	40%	30%	10%
• Work in groups		16%	39%	22%	22%	10%	20%	40%	30%	
• work together to sort out problems in class			28%	33%	22%	30%	20%	30%	10%	10%

APPENDIX II

Table 6: Responses of pupils from project schools (A & B) and comparator school (C) who answered 'strongly agree' or 'agree' to all questions apart from questions 6, 7, 12 and 13 which required a 'Yes' or 'No' answer

	Question	School A			School B		Comparator School (C)		
		Y7 N=116	Y8 N=106	Y9 N=122	Y7 N=114	Y8 N=104	Y7 N=61	Y8 N=12	Y9 N=128
Self esteem	1. I am proud of myself	91%	86%	85%	**95%*>**	**75%*<**	82%	91%	83%
	2. I am kind to others	94%	92%	95%	94%	93%	**89%*<**	100%	95%
	3. I do most things well	84%	87%	86%	94%	85%	**80%*<**	100%	86%
	4. I am a nice person	96%	91%	90%	94%	**87%*<**	89%	100%	94%
	5. I like myself	**77%*<**	81%	**73%*<**	89%	77%	**74%*<**	92%	**71%*<**
Bullying	6. I have experienced bullying or have seen others bullied on the way to and from school (Answered Yes)	**74%*>**	**76%*>**	**71%*>**	**61%*>**	**68%*>**	**62%*>**	**75%*>**	**67%*>**
	7. I have experienced bullying or have seen others bullied during the school day (Answered Yes)	**65*%***	**61%*>**	**62%*>**	**50%*>**	**71%*>**	**57%*>**	50%	**58%*>**
Action on Bullying	8. The school would be able to stop me being bullied if it happened	**94%*>**	**92%*>**	**84%*>**	91%	73%	90%	92%	79%
	9. I would tell someone in school if I saw someone else being bullied	92%	87%	85%	96%	91%	93%	100%	90%
	10. I know who to tell if I am bullied	96%	96%	93%	**99%*>**	92%	93%	83%	88%
	11. I understand the school's policy on bullying	98%	95%	98%	99%	97%	97%	100%	97%
Racism	12.I have heard racist remarks, directed at me or others, on the way to and from school (Answered Yes)	30%	33%	39%	32%	34%	31%	50%	36%
	13. I have heard racist remarks, directed at me or others, during the school day (Answered Yes)	23%	28%	28%	21%	27%	18%	**58%*>**	25%
Action on Racism	14.The school would be able to stop me suffering from racism if it happened	91%	87%	85%	90%	**92%*>**	87%	92%	**92%*>**
	15.I would tell a teacher if I suffered from racist insults	94%	**92%*>**	87%	93%	**90%*>**	92%	82%	**90%*>**
	16.I know who to tell if I suffer from racist insults in school	94%	87%	**94%*>**	**96%*>**	92%	87%	83%	86%

	17.I understand what the school's policy on racism is	96%	91%	91%	93%	**96%*>**	89%	92%	**94%*>**
Attitude and Behaviour	18.When the teacher asks the class a question, I shout out the answer	**43%*>**	**50%*>**	**47%*>**	**36%*>**	35%	**39%*>**	**64%*>**	**51%*>**
	19.In lessons, I forget what I am supposed to be doing	**46%*>**	46%	**54%*>**	34%	49%	38%	**83%*>**	**65%*>**
	20.I have arguments with my friends	**63%*>**	64%	**71%*>**	**55%*>**	64%	48%	75%	**75%*>**
	21.I push into the front of a queue because I do not like to have to wait	**24%*>**	30%	32%	18%	**35%*>**	20%	25%	24%
	22.During last term I did something wrong in lessons	44%	**61%*>**	48%	43%	48%	40%	67%	53%
	23.During last term I deliberately tried to annoy people in school	12%	**30%*>**	**34%*>**	17%	16%	18%	25%	**34%*>**
	24.During last term I refused to do what my teacher asked me to do	**22%*>**	**38%*>**	**33%*>**	13%	**31%*>**	12%	**42%*>**	25%
	25.During last term I have lost my temper in school	**43%*>**	43%	42%	35%	44%	36%	**83%*>**	**50%*>**
	26.During last term I have been involved in a fight in school	**26%*>**	22%	19%	20%	**24%*>**	18%	**50%*>**	20%
	27.During last term I have seen someone threatened in school	**37%*>**	27%	**36%*>**	26%	**34%*>**	**46%*>**	42%	**36%*>**
School Climate	28.The teachers treat everyone with respect	88%	83%	76%	88%	70%	81%	83%	**77%*>**
	29.We feel safe in school	87%	85%	89%	88%	**73%*<**	82%	83%	82%
	30.Teachers try hard to help us	92%	89%	83%	91%	79%	87%	92%	**87%*>**
	31.We can talk to each other about problems	79%	80%	74%	81%	69%	87%	73%	72%
	32.At this school we like each other	85%	81%	**62%*<**	82%	**67%*<**	87%	82%	75%
	33.At this school we care about each other	86%	75%	72%	88%	74%	85%	92%	79%
Understanding Rights and Responsibilities	34.The school has helped me understand the difference between right and wrong	93%	93%	96%	95%	93%	93%	92%	94%
	35.The school expects us to take responsibility for what we do	95%	94%	98%	96%	93%	97%	91%	94%
	36.The school has made me aware of my responsibilities to others	94%	90%	92%	94%	90%	88%	83%	89%
	37.The school has made me aware of my rights as an individual	93%	90%	**91%*>**	**95%*>**	88%	92%	92%	81%
	38.The school takes notice of the opinions of its students	85%	**89%*>**	**86%*>**	**93%*>**	78%	90%	100%	81%
	39.The school takes trouble to find out what its students think about important issues.	86%	80%	77%	82%	70%	87%	70%	**86%*>**

Table 7: 'Yes' responses of pupils who have witnessed bullying and racist remarks

	Question	School A			School B		Comparator School		
		Y7 N=116	Y8 N=106	Y9 N=122	Y7 N=114	Y8 N=104	Y7 N=61	Y8 N=12	Y9 N=128
Bullying on the way to or from school	1. Was any of this bullying videoed using a mobile phone?	17%	8%	13%	10%	6%	13%	**43%*>**	6%
	2. Did any of this bullying involve text messaging?	24%	14%	31%	20%	23%	29%	13%	31%
	3. Was this whilst walking or cycling to school?	**54%*>**	**42%*>**	**49%*>**	34%	23%	26%	44%	32%
	4. Was this on public transport?	28%	**28%>**	28%	17%	7%	13%	25%	19%
	5. Was this on school transport?	27%	23%	26%	25%	22%	**13%*<**	44%	17%
Bullying during the school day	6. Was any of this bullying videoed using a mobile phone?	10%	3%	7%	7%	8%	**20%*>**	**60%*>**	7%
	7. Was any of this bullying via e-mail or MSN Messenger (or similar)?	17%	11%	23%	9%	15%	17%	20%	18%
	8. Did any of this bullying involve text messaging?	19%	**5%*<**	23%	15%	14%	**26%*>**	20%	25%
	9. Was this in the toilets?	14%	19%	15%	11%	10%	17%	20%	**23%*>**
	10.Was this during the change of lesson (in the corridor for example)?	**54%*>**	37%	53%	45%	**53%*>**	31%	20%	44%
	11.Was this at breaktime or lunchtime?	81%	**95%*>**	92%	86%	81%	86%	100%	77%
	12.Was this during outdoor lessons?	61%	54%	59%	48%	**59%*>**	46%	**100%*>**	58%
	13.Was this during classroom lessons?	**46%*>**	**52%*>**	**73%*>**	41%	**63%*>**	37%	**100%*>**	**63%*>**
Racism on the way to or from school	14.Did any of these racist remarks involve text messaging?	**24%*>**	9%	13%	19%	11%	16%	33%	**23%*>**
	15.Was this whilst walking or cycling to school?	**53%*>**	**44%*>**	37%	31%	20%	32%	33%	30%
	16.Was this on public transport?	29%	21%	32%	**47%*>**	12%	26%	33%	17%
	17.Was this on school transport?	32%	24%	28%	**49%*>**	18%	11%	**83%*>**	15%
	18.Were any of these racist remarks sent via e-mail or MSN	**29%*>**	7%	15%	23%	11%	27%	17%	16%

Racism during the school day	Messenger (or similar)?								
	19.Were any of these racist remarks sent via text messaging?	**33%*>**	7%	18%	18%	11%	**36%*>**	33%	23%
	20.Was this in the toilets?	25%	11%	21%	14%	11%	0%	17%	28%
	21.Was this during the change of lesson (in the corridor for example)?	**63%*>**	43%	**67%*>**	36%	39%	27%	33%	55%
	22.Was this at breaktime or lunchtime?	92%	68%	76%	91%	75%	73%	67%	72%
	23.Was this during outdoor lessons?	58%	43%	58%	43%	50%	27%	50%	44%
	24.Was this during classroom lessons?	38%	43%	59%	39%	**29%*<**	18%	71%	53%

APPENDIX III

	Academic Year	Number of exclusions	% change
School A	2011-12	60	-28%
	2010-11	84	29%
	2009-10	59	-52%
	2008-09	123	
	2007-08	N/A	-
School B	2011-12	14	-55%
	2010-11	31	-14%
	2009-10	36	-14%
	2008-09	42	-54%
	2007-08	91	
	Academic Year	Number of days	% change
School A	2011-12	142	-42%
	2010-11	243.5	40%
	2009-10	174.5	-49%
	2008-09	341	
	2007-08	N/A	
School B	2011-12	42	-68%
	2010-11	130	6%
	2009-10	122.5	-2%
	2008-09	124.5	-60%
	2007-8	313.5	

Table 8: Trends in Exclusions for schools A & B (2007-12)

APPENDIX IV

5 Theme Model

The model embraced by the project reflects the work of Dr Belinda Hopkins, focusing upon five key themes which provide a structure for everyday interactions and more formal interventions:

- **A Unique Perspective**

Everyone has a unique and equally valued perspective.

- **Linking thoughts, feelings and behaviours**

It is our interpretation of a situation that triggers our emotional response and this in turn influences our behaviour. The behaviours that we see and hear in our everyday interactions are the tip of the iceberg. Beneath the surface are the thoughts and feelings of each individual. These thoughts and feelings are influencing what each person does and says. It is important to take these hidden drivers into account and allow them to be surfaced.

- **Harm and Affect**

Our actions have consequences for ourselves and those around us. Empathy, sensitivity, consideration and respect are critical factors in working successfully with others.

- **Needs and Repair**

Restorative Approaches is a needs led approach; it recognises that when our needs are met we are able to behave with respect, empathy and consideration for others. Negative or inappropriate behaviour is seen as being motivated by the unmet needs of the individual. Proactively identifying the underlying needs of those we are working with enables us to develop strategies to meet those needs.

- **Shared Ownership for Problem Solving**

A recognition of the fact that those involved are best placed to find ways forward and that we each have a role in developing, maintaining and where appropriate, restoring successful and meaningful relationships.

APPENDIX V

Implementation of a Restorative Approach in a Local Authority

Step 1 Authority Level
Awareness raising for senior managers of authority's children and family services, local schools, Pupil Referral Units, Children's Homes, Youth Offending Team, Police and probation services to generate interest and identify pilot projects. (Half day session)

Step 2 In-house level – individual schools/units/homes/service
Targeted INSET for pilot projects – one day INSET for staff team of pilot project to gauge interest and commitment and identify participants for the steering group who will participate in the first 5-day training.

Step 3 In - house training for the steering group
The introductory course covers over 35 hours (5/6 days):
- An introduction to Restorative Justice philosophy, skills and principles
- Active empathic listening and Restorative Enquiry
- Dealing with challenging situations one to one
- Mediating others' conflicts
- Facilitating a restorative or community conference
- First steps in implementing a Restorative and Relational Approach

Step 4 Individual project development
 In-house steering group develop an implementation plan for their particular school/unit/home/service – looking at necessary policy changes; implementing referral protocols; identifying how to start using the more formal restorative processes - with whom and in what situations; beginning to use their new skills at an informal level; establishing a regular support group to review how they are doing in their day-to-day use of restorative dialogue; implementing evaluation and monitoring procedures; identify individuals who take the lead on individual elements of a restorative approach and who start with a review. In a school, for example, this might
include:
- Use of Circle Time and/or Circles Process amongst staff and amongst young people
- Can the links between emotional literacy and restorative approaches be made more explicit?
- To what extent do young people currently have a voice on issues that involve them?
- Could young people be involved more in supporting each other (e.g. mentoring and
   mediation)
- Is there a mechanism for measuring/recording present effectiveness and impact of
   existing behaviour management policies?
- How can everyone be clear what issues are dealt with, by whom and how?
- To what extent could issues involving staff/students, staff/staff and staff/parents be
   dealt with restoratively?

Step 4   Review of progress
Following several months of skills development by trained individuals using what they have learnt progress is reviewed by the Steering Group and next steps planned – e.g. in a school - more training of staff and /or students; policy and procedures update; links to parents, governors, outside support agencies etc.

Step 5   Sustainability
After several terms of practice the original steering group will be in a position to enhance their skills by **training to be trainers** and establishing a rolling programme of in-house short courses to ensure that the whole staff, and incoming new members of staff, has the minimum training required to be restorative in their day-to-day dealings with students. **Evaluation and monitoring procedures** need to be kept in place and regularly reviewed. The steering group will need to meet regularly to ensure the approach is constantly re-visited, relevant new initiatives assessed to keep skills fresh and that those who have been trained have regular opportunities to share their experiences and update their skills.
It is strongly recommended that a **co-ordinator** for the initiative is appointed to oversee the supervision and support of the training team, the on-going evaluation and monitoring, future fund raising, partnership development across the authority, continue with outreach and organise on-going training and refresher courses.