

ST PIUS X HIGH SCHOOL POLICY STATEMENT RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

1. Rationale

As a Catholic School guided by the motto "Renewing all things in Christ", St Pius X High School endeavours to provide for each member of the community – students, parents, staff and clergy – the experience of high quality interpersonal relationships of care and support. From time to time in any community, relationships can be harmed in various ways and to varying degrees. It is therefore essential that St Pius X High School (SPX) is a community that promotes the resolution of conflicts between community members and the restoration of relationships between these community members. The Restorative Justice Policy at SPX provides a framework within which this can be achieved.

Restorative Justice at SPX is based on the belief that when relationships are harmed we must work with the students, teachers and parents involved to restore the relationships.

"I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." (John 13:34-35)

At SPX we do not simply do things to people, a punitive approach, nor do we simply do things for the people involved, a permissive approach. Restorative Justice is a commitment to inclusiveness so that we make every attempt to reintegrate our troubled students, even with severe behaviour difficulties. It is a commitment to a high degree of discipline with clear limits and consequences coupled with a high degree of support and care.

Restorative measures assist students to learn from their mistakes, reconcile their differences and resolve problems with others. Restorative measures can effectively address a wide variety of harm done in school settings including truancy, bullying, harassment, classroom or yard misbehaviour or non-cooperation, alcohol and other drug use and many other cases.

The Discipline Policy at SPX evolves from the Pastoral Care Policy insofar as each seeks to promote a respectful, secure and healthy environment in which students grow to be discerning, self-disciplined and contributing members of society. The Restorative Justice Policy at SPX is an essential element of the Pastoral Care Policy and guides the application of all discipline at the School.

The Restorative Justice Policy at St Pius X High School reflects the *Diocesan Vision Statement* for Catholic schools and is guided by the principles stated in the Diocesan Pastoral Care Policy and the St Pius X High School Pastoral Care Policy, specifically:

Restorative Justice:

- 1.1 Acknowledges that the responsibility to act justly is expected of all members of the school community.
- 1.2 Seeks, celebrates and affirms the giftedness within each person.
- 1.3 Recognises that quality relationships are fundamental to effective learning and genuine pastoral care.
- 1.4 Ensures correlation between the rhetoric of Gospel values and the reality as expressed in structures, procedures and practices.
- 1.5 At times, when the nature of the behaviour or action of a student is explicit, deliberate, and carried out with full knowledge, fairly strong consequences such as suspension may be required. When imposed, suspension should be viewed and explained as an opportunity for reflection and growth on the part of the student ultimately aimed at assisting the student to make the necessary changes to facilitate his or her success at the School.

2. Aims

- 2.1 St Pius X High School, through this Restorative Justice Policy aims:
 - 2.1.1 To create within the School community an affirming climate that gives value to the Gospel teachings of love, compassion, tolerance, acceptance, forgiveness, reconciliation and justice
 - 2.1.2 To give expression to the relationships of faith, care and support that characterise the School's vision, ethos and practice
 - 2.1.3 To ensure that Restorative Practices are integral to and permeate the total environment and culture of the School
 - 2.1.4 To develop structures and practices that support the individual student and all members of the school community
 - 2.1.5 To promote resilience in both the person who is harmed in a given situation and in the person who causes the harm
 - 2.1.6 To assist those who cause harm to learn from their mistakes, reconcile their differences and resolve problems with others
 - 2.1.7 To guide the application of all discipline at the School.

3. Implementation

The Restorative Justice Policy will be implemented in the following ways:

- 3.1 The Dean of Students is directly responsible to the Principal for ensuring that the policy is implemented as an integral part of the School Pastoral Care Policy. The Dean of Students is responsible for ensuring that the policy is evaluated at appropriate time intervals.
- 3.2 The Principal is responsible for providing a suitable Professional Development program to ensure that all Staff are familiar with the principles and practice of Restorative Justice and that all Student and Studies Coordinators are adequately trained in the leadership of Restorative Practices.
- 3.3 There are a range of Restorative Practices that aim to bring about resolution, repair damaged relationships and see a new way forward. They can be seen along a continuum from the informal through to the very formal.
 - 3.3.1 Affective Questions and Statements provide teachers with some tools of how to speak with individual students when they have misbehaved. The emphasis is on how people are affected so that some learning occurs.
 - 3.3.2 The Teacher / Student / Middle Management Triad is a useful mediation technique.
 - 3.3.3 Restorative Justice Problem Solving involves the student, peer, parents and key staff. This is a highly effective tool following a suspension.
 - 3.3.4 Family School Conferencing involves an external facilitator and may be used when the behaviour is of such severity that expulsion is being considered.
- 3.4 The Restorative Justice Policy will guide all discipline at SPX.
- 3.5 The School Executive Team will be responsible for announcing, disseminating and explaining this policy to the School community.

4. BUDGET

At SPX each year a certain amount of funding is set aside for Staff Professional Development. A portion of these funds will be made available at appropriate times for the professional development of Staff in the principles and practice of Restorative Justice.

5. EVALUATION

- 5.1 The effectiveness of the Restorative Justice Policy will be assessed in a manner and at a time deemed appropriate by the School Executive.
- 5.2 The School Evaluation and Development process (SEVDEV) will also provide feedback on the appropriateness and effectiveness of the Restorative Justice Policy at SPX.