

Restorative Justice in Education

Discussing international practices, exploring the future for Scotland

28/09/2020

Webinar

The 2nd Seminar of the Scottish Network of Restorative Justice Researchers

13.00-16.45

This event will be held online via ZOOM (due to the current pandemic)

The Scottish Network of Restorative Justice Researchers, with the support of the Scottish Center for Crime and Justice Research and the University of Edinburgh have organised an international seminar on restorative justice in the field of education.

The aim is to learn from international practices and developments and think together how this could be relevant and developed further in Scotland.

Programme

13:00-13:15 Welcome and introductions

13:15-13:45 Dr. Dorothy Vaandering, Canada

13:45-14:15 Dr. Maija Gellin, Finland

14:15-15:00 Health break

15:00-15:30 Mr. Chris Straker, England

15:30-16:00 Prof. Gillean McCluskey, Scotland

16:00-16:30 Questions and discussion

16:30-16:45 Summing up and conclusions

The event is free but registration is mandatory. The zoom link will be shared only with registered participants.

For practical reasons, we will close the registrations by 21 September 2020, so please register as soon as possible.

If you need more information, please contact Estelle Zinsstag, co-chair of the Scottish Network of Restorative Justice Researchers at: estelle.zinsstag@kuleuven.be

When policy ‘kicks-in’ people get ‘kicked-out’

Dorothy Vaandering

‘When policy ‘kicks-in’ people get ‘kicked-out’—is an exclamation that came out of a recent situation in Newfoundland while working in conjunction with parents who are addressing challenges their children and youth face in schools. When we share details about serious incidents either informally or formally with leaders in schools, we are encouraged to tell our stories and then after a quick thank you and a promise to address it, everything suddenly goes silent. When we ask for an update, the response always includes references to policies and privacy. Have you received or given such a response in your context? What does this response reveal about our schools and how can it inform moving restorative justice forward in a good way?’

Dr Dorothy Vaandering is an associate professor at the Faculty of Education, Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada. After an extensive career as a Primary-Elementary educator, she is now a teacher-educator and researcher examining the implementation and sustainability of restorative justice in education. She is the co-author of the ‘Little Book of Restorative Justice in Education’ (with Katherine Evans) and founder and director of ‘Relationships First: Restorative Justice Education Consortium of NL’.

Restorative approaches and mediation in Finnish schools

Maija Gellin

Restorative approaches and mediation have been implemented in Finnish schools since 2000. Restorative practices and mediation are used as child friendly processes when managing challenging situations, misbehaviour and bullying in schools. The trainings for whole school restorative approaches have been developed under a national programme called VERSO. The programme contains models for restorative circles, peer mediation and adult led mediation in schools, and mediation skills for staff members in day care. The programme is funded by the Finnish Ministry of Social Affairs and Health. Basically the aim is to increase democracy and pupil participation, strengthen relationships and improve learning of social skills even in conflict situations. Pupils are understood as active and capable experts in their peer groups when solving different kinds of social situations. Mediation in schools can be seen as a learning situation where children learn not only to manage conflicts but also to use their right of participating and being heard. When using mediation even among children in kindergartens and schools, common information of restorative practices and mediation processes can also reach members of their families and other citizens.

Dr. Maija Gellin (PhD, MA Education, BA Youth Work) is the director of the programme for restorative approach and mediation in education (VERSO-programme) in Finland. She has been the main method developer and trainer over 20 years. Gellin is also a mediator and she has specialised in cases in schools and among juvenile and families and in workplaces. Her PhD dissertation was on restorative approaches and mediation in context of basic education (in Finnish) and was accepted in November 2019. Gellin is a board member of Finnish Forum for Mediation (FFM).

Emperor’s new clothes: a personal reflection on the development of the restorative school. Lessons from development of individual school and city-wide projects in restorative practice.

Chris Straker

The presentation will draw upon the work Chris has undertaken within primary, secondary and special schools, since 2007 in England. It will propose a way of developing schools as restorative organisations which place relationships at the heart of all aspects of the life of the school. Chris believes that this requires a very deliberate approach that reflects the individual needs of a school and cannot be a one-size-fits-all model. The presentation will look at lessons learnt and stories of success. It will explore how restorative practice principles and processes have to be at the heart of change as well as the end a school is looking to achieve.

Chris Straker (BA, MA in restorative justice with a focus on the restorative city). Chris was a teacher for 33 years, seven of which were spent as Headteacher at Endeavour High School in Hull, developing a restorative school. He was also the co-founder of the Hull Centre for Restorative Practice. Since 2012 he has been a trainer and consultant working with schools and Children and Young People Services across England and Wales. He was also the interim CEO of the Restorative Justice Council from 2017 to 2019.

Restorative practices in education: current experiences and possible futures

Gillean McCluskey

Research suggests that restorative practices in schools can challenge and change troubled and troublesome behaviour and also improve school climate overall (Drewery 2014, Gregory et. al 2014, McCluskey et al. 2014, Vaandering 2013, Skinns et. al. 2009, McCluskey and Lloyd 2009, Kane et al. 2008, APA 2008). This presentation will examine key themes in school-based restorative strategy and practices in Scotland, the use of restorative language, and engagement with young people, parents and community. From there, it moves on to discuss the key questions for school security, surveillance and punishment raised by restorative practices, before pointing finally to the importance of the emerging focus on a new, more critically focused understanding of restorative practices.

Professor Gillean McCluskey (School of Education and Sports, University of Edinburgh). In recent years, my research, teaching and writing has focused on two related fields of endeavour: a) restorative practices in education and b) exclusion from school. My work aims to contribute to understanding of the impact of inequalities in education by advancing first, our understanding of exclusion from school and, secondly, the role that RP may have to play in this. I have worked in mainstream schools and alternative settings with young people in trouble and at risk in the past and maintain a close interest in the lived experiences of schooling, and the importance of listening to young people. I am currently working with colleagues at the Universities of Oxford, Cardiff and Queen’s Belfast on a research project focused on school exclusion across the UK [https:// www.ed.ac.uk/education/rke/centres-groups/creid/projects/political-economies-sch-exclusion-uk](https://www.ed.ac.uk/education/rke/centres-groups/creid/projects/political-economies-sch-exclusion-uk)