

Responsible Thinking Classroom (RTC) Questions & Answers

- Primary Families -

Mission Statement

Enriching lives by fostering right relationships and responsible thinking.

Vision

Our vision is to see each student think and behave responsibly, and recognise that their actions have individual and collective consequences.

What is RTC?

RTC refers to the Responsible Thinking Classroom (a physical location), whilst RTP refers to the Responsible Thinking Process (the process students participate in whilst inside the RTC).

Parklands utilises the Responsible Thinking Process (RTP) to help guide our behaviour education strategies. RTP is designed to intervene before a student's behaviour intensifies in order to help students learn self-control. The Responsible Thinking Classroom (RTC), supported by a team of RTP Facilitators, provides the opportunity for students to learn how to modify their behaviour. We believe that behaviour is a concept that is taught just like any other subject and sometimes students need time and space to get their head around the impact of their behaviour. RTC is a space to learn responsibility, self-control and devise strategies for positive life choices.

Common Misconceptions about RTC

Parents sometimes struggle to differentiate between RTC as a place of learning rather than a detention room. In short, **RTC is not**

1. A place for 'naughty' students to go
2. A means of punishment
3. A detention
4. A sign that the students enrolment is being questioned
5. An opportunity for students to get out of doing classwork.

Common RTC Behaviour Referral Questions

What behavioural reasons can students get referred to the RTC for?

Safety or disruptions in class (such as talking, calling out, out of seat etc.) are the core behaviours which result in an RTC referral. Other behaviours such as disrespect towards teachers, defiance or disobedience, work avoidance, inappropriate language or use of computers may result in the RTP Facilitators referring the student to talk to a Head of School (HoS). So too if a student continues their disruptive behaviour whilst in the RTC, that student may then be referred to a HoS.

Why does it appear that my child attends RTC so often?

1. RTC is a place for students to learn new behaviours; some students take longer to learn certain behaviours than others and thus may be referred more often than another. Consistency is the key to learning new behaviours.
2. Teachers proactively use in the responsible thinking process to ensure that the child recognises their behaviour whilst in the act and work to change it before the severity of it increases.
3. The RTP Facilitator team are committed to communicating home via email (or Phone if an email is not provided) for every RTC referral that occurs. The key purpose of this is to ensure that there are **No Surprises** for parents about their child's behavioural and educational choices. This can be very different to other school behaviour structures.
4. If you are concerned that your child is attending more often than you would like please be quick to come and speak with an RTP Facilitator. We will be able to provide you with a history as well as ease your concerns.
5. Finally remember we believe in **No Surprises**; if we are concerned with your child's RTC referrals an RTP Facilitator would be in close communication with you via phone or in-person discussions in order to support your child and yourself.

Is it normal for a child to be referred often?

Students in primary school may attend RTC more often than their parents first expect; please do not feel alarmed by this. At the beginning of each term the teachers spend considerable time supporting students to learn the school rules, one of the tools they use is the RTC. It is not uncommon for some students to be referred more than once a day as they settle into the school routine and get used to their new teacher.

I don't want my child to miss any class work!

Parents often feel concerned that their child is missing classwork; however we encourage parents to recognise that if the child is not engaged in the lesson then there is a good chance that they are not concentrating on the work. Our primary goal is for students to learn how to engage positively in their classroom so when they are in class they can focus on their learning goals. The RTP process is usually very quick but allows the child time to reflect, practice their new skills and return to the classroom with a new plan to implement.

What happens if there is another child involved in the incident?

Sometimes your child's behaviour is provoked or shared with another child. Please rest assured that each child involved in an incident is dealt with properly, however the RTP Facilitator team does not discuss a child's referral process with anyone other than their direct caregiver.

Why is my child being referred to the RTC for 'little' behavioural things?

The RTC process is designed to intervene before a student's behaviour intensifies in order to help student to stay engaged in the classroom. Removing the student for 10 minutes is often all it takes for them remember how to think responsibly about their behaviour for the remainder of the day. This is especially important for primary students who sometimes need a little time-out away from a certain friend or distraction to resettle them.

Why does my child say that they like going to the RTC?

At Parklands we believe that there is always a reason behind a child's disruptive behaviour. To that end, the RTC is designed to be a supportive, non-threatening environment whereby students can openly discuss their thoughts and feelings knowing that they will be listened to. The positive relationships built between students and RTP facilitators' results in students feeling better about themselves as well as their potential for change and personal growth. Our hope is that all students leave the RTC smiling and ready to reengage in learning by putting into practice the strategies that they have personally developed.

My child is still young; can they really be held responsible for their actions?

RTP is a great process which can be aimed at all age groups to help them to think through their actions and plan for change. It is very important for all students to participate in this process so that they can begin developing the skills of thinking about their own actions, take personal responsibility and become confident using the consistent behaviour approach operating at PCC. Each time they use this process they will get better at self-reflection and ultimately self-control. This is the goal for students as they progress through prep to year 12.

Common Uniform Pass Questions

If I know my child is going to school in the wrong uniform what should I do?

Parents are asked to communicate with the RTP Facilitators via a note, phone or email uniformpass@parklands.qld.edu.au in every instance where your child is out of uniform.

Common Home Communication Questions

Why are there so many emails?

We are committed to contacting parents every time an RTC referral occurs. This may feel overwhelming and at times alarming that your child is attending RTC but our overarching mantra "No Surprises" is the reason for this. It is not expected that you respond to each communication, sometimes it is for your information only. Ultimately how you respond to the information provided via email, letter or phone is your choice; we are simply following our requirement of ensuring that you know about your child's behavioural and academic choices.

Can I opt out of home communications?

Parklands Christian College Code of Behaviour specifically states that an RTP Facilitator will contact home as a result of all RTC referrals. Thus parents are not able to opt out of receiving this information.

What is an "Operation Snippet 2.0"?

Whilst we perceive RTC as a positive learning tool for all students, not all parents feel this way and receiving a home communication from us can be perceived as a negative experience. In order to balance this perception we launched Operation Snippet 2.0 during semester 2 2012. Operation Snippet 2.0 is a referral process for staff to send messages home about a child's positive decision during the day. We encourage you to celebrate this achievement with your child if you receive such a letter. Similarly students and parents are encouraged to send Snippets to staff members via the RTC. Please email or pop-in any time to do this.

How can I support the responsible thinking process from home?

The one question that we get asked during just about every conversation is what parents can do to support the RTC process once their child returns home. To this question we cannot tell you what to do; but we can make recommendations based on what we experience and see from our students.

Many of our students reflect that they are afraid, not of RTC, but of their parents finding out that they came to RTC. As an RTC facility we do not encourage punishment or rewards as teaching tools; rather RTP provides the opportunity for us to teach students how to look within themselves, decide the way they want to be and restructure their own lives so they can get what they want without violating the rights of others.

As far as we are concerned, once a student has worked through their responsible thinking plan and negotiated their return to class with the referring teacher the plan is filed and the incident is considered 'over'. When students return their plans to the RTC we remind them that they now have a 'fresh start' to try the strategies that they have agreed to as part of their plans. We encourage students to talk to their parents about their referral and the plan that they created including the strategies that they agreed to implement.

We encourage all parents to talk calmly and openly with their child about their RTC referrals by using the same questions that we use during the responsible thinking process. By doing this the child can consider their behaviour and plan with a person outside of the school environment and further enhance their learning.

The RTP Questions that we use to discuss a referral include:

- What were you doing? Describe what happened which resulted in the referral.
- What should you have been doing?
- What was the school rule you were not following?
 1. I can respect the right of others to learn
 2. I can be safe and keep other safe
 3. I am prepared for class and ready to learn
 4. I can respect the property of others and the college
- What is your plan? What choices can you now make to change your behaviour, attitude and/or actions?
- What changes will we see in you as a result of your plan?

If you would like further information or support in using this process at home please make an appointment to speak with an RTP Facilitator.

Call us... (07) 33804219

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