

Re: Responsible Thinking at Parklands

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

The Responsible Thinking Classroom (RTC) has a wonderful team of staff. Together we are able to not only help students make positive informed choices, but we also have the time to get alongside students and support them to develop their social and emotional skills. You will quickly notice that we run this process fairly differently from other schools, and that we pride ourselves in keeping parents informed, involved and positive about their child's success story.

This information pack is designed to provide you with an overview of how Responsible Thinking is taught to students at Parklands, its purpose and our overall goal for each child's schooling journey. As you learn about the Responsible Thinking Process, and how this is applied at Parklands please use this info pack to seek the answers to any questions that may arise.

In addition some of the useful websites you may wish to access include:

RTP Information:

<http://parklands.qld.edu.au/behaviour-education-rtp/>

RTP Resources, Tips and Myths and Plan Examples

<http://parklands.qld.edu.au/how-rtp-works/>

RTP Q&A Primary and Secondary:

<http://parklands.qld.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/RTC-QandA-Primary.pdf>

<http://parklands.qld.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/RTC-QandA-Secondary.pdf>

If you would like to discuss this further please feel welcome to pop in to the RTC to visit, phone or send through an email rtc-staff@parklands.qld.edu.au.

Sincerely,

Through the Heads of School

Mr Justin Crawford
Social Worker

Mr Grant Jakins (Primary) and
Ms Jessica Grounds (Secondary)



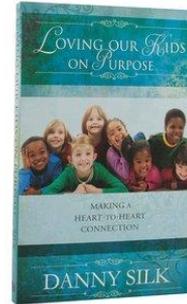
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Re: Loving Our Kids On Purpose

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

Loving our Kids on Purpose is on again, and you're invited.

"This program provided our family with some great insight into parenting techniques and what drives children's behaviour/reactions while bringing the family closer together through love. We have absolutely seen a positive change in not only our children but our own relationship. Highly recommended!" (2018 parent)



The Loving Our Kids On Purpose (LoKoP) course is pioneered by Danny Silk (Loving on Purpose Ministries) and aims to help parents understand their roles as parents, provide parents the skills to teach children how to manage increasing levels of freedom and learning to replace the tools of intimidation and control as a priority if we are to train our children in love.

LoKoP is delivered by a team of Parklands staff who are committed to leading you into an understanding of biblical parenting principles and a practical application of skills and techniques. The key topics that will be covered include introduction to loving on purpose, the language of empowerment, no fear in love, building personal responsibility and imparting strength and honour.

At Parklands the staff implement the LoKoP principles in connection with our behaviour education process (RTP). This provides a consistent language in the classroom across year levels. Parents who participate in LoKoP develop not only a greater understanding of our behaviour education approach, but also create a seamless cultural language between school and the home environment.

LoKoP is usually delivered three times per year and occur on **Monday Nights 6.30pm – 8.30pm** in the Function Room for the duration of 5 sessions.

The LoKoP course is only offered to parents of children currently enrolled at Parklands Christian College. Participation in LoKoP is a one off payment of \$20 per person or \$30 per couple, payable via Administration. This payment will cover the delicious refreshments offered each session.

Parents are encouraged to purchase Danny Silk's book "Loving Our Kids on Purpose" to compliment the learning and strategies presented during the course. This resource is available from Koorong book store or www.koorong.com for approximately \$19.99. Alternatively the workbooks are available for purchase during the course.

We look forward to offering this excellent course to Parklands familie. Please email Mr Justin Crawford to register your interest the next course - jcrawford@parklands.qld.edu.au

Kind Regards

Through the Principal

Mr Justin Crawford
Social Worker

Mr Gary Cully



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RTP @ PCC

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.

Parkland Christian College utilises the **Responsible Thinking Process (RTP)** founded on **Perceptual Control Theory (PCT)** to help guide our behaviour education strategies. The **Responsible Thinking Classroom (RTC)**, supported by a team of **RTP Facilitators** is accessed by students to help them 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.

The RTC is such a space.

One of the misconceptions about RTC is that it is for 'naughty' students and is therefore a punishment and detention. This is not true; rather RTC is a space to learn responsibility, self-control and devise strategies for positive life choices. This is **not accurate!** We avoid using words like detention and bad or naughty and certainly don't associate 'fear' with the RTC.

A student may use the RTC for the following:

- ◆ Own their behaviour and devise strategies to respect the right of others to learn
- ◆ Complete homework, unfinished class work and assignments
- ◆ Study quietly and use the computers
- ◆ Print assignments
- ◆ Sort out uniform infringements
- ◆ Discuss any difficulties regarding staff or fellow students
- ◆ Process non-RTP behaviours

Through using RTP, we can help build the confidence of students by teaching them how to think responsibly and feel good about themselves. One way of doing this is to incorporate quality time. By providing quality time with these students we establish relationship, which is essential in the building up of self-worth and ability to succeed. So when things do go wrong, or a problem arises, the student can learn to achieve their goals whilst respecting other students' right to learn.

- ◆ We take time out to **listen** to them, and try to understand WHY they feel the need to continue being disruptive.
- ◆ We spend **quality** time with that student.
- ◆ We treat them the same as every other student.

For more information on this process please visit:

RTP Website: <http://responsiblethinking.com/>

PCT Website: <http://www.pctweb.org/>



RTP: HOW IT WORKS

Students who act as disturbances in the class or playground need to develop the skills required for getting along with others and following the [class rules and values](#). The Responsible Thinking Process works when teachers are able to give those students, who are disruptive, the opportunity for self-reflection in a non-controlling and supportive environment. When a student disrupts the teacher will ask them to reflect on their behaviour using a series of [RTP questions](#). The student then has the opportunity to decide how they will behave for the remainder of the lesson. If the disruptive behaviour continues to occur, the student is given the opportunity for deeper self-reflection.

The student does this in what's known as the Responsible Thinking Classroom, or RTC. Whilst in the RTC the child will spend time with an RTP facilitator who will listen to them patiently, without making judgment, and help the student to develop ways of achieving their goals and get along with others by thinking responsibly and following the class rules, without violating the rights of others to learn.

The student works through a RTP plan and makes his or her own suggestions on how they can achieve these goals. The student then talks this plan through with the teacher and negotiates a time when they, the student, can return back to the classroom. The teacher can make suggestions to the student to enable him or her to fulfill their plan. A plan is never ignored or refused and is taken as a sincere commitment by the student.

The key component of this classroom discipline process is its focus on how students can achieve their goals without getting in the way of others who are trying to do the same thing. In short, it teaches students how to respect others.

FREQUENT FLYERS

No matter how many times a particular student is referred to the RTC. Each "Frequent Flyer" should be given the same opportunities as any other student. Every student is given the opportunity to reflect on the impact of their behaviour and its impact on the teaching and learning process.

REDUCED DISRUPTION

The RTC is a wonderful way to minimize class disruption. For example, if a student forgets to bring any significant equipment, rather than the teacher using up valuable class time following up a number of students, asking where their equipment is and organizing for equipment replacement then discussing better planning for the future, the student is referred to the RTC. The trip to the RTC takes about 5 minutes to collect a form that reviews their behaviour and requires the student to develop a plan to avoid the situation again. The teacher is free to deal with the student later, read their plan and assist the student as needed. This can all be done in a time when the teacher is free to deal with the issue without directly effecting teaching time. This same strategy is used for a wide range of disruptive behaviours including incomplete homework or assignments and lateness.

NON-RTC BEHAVIOURS

If a student is disrespectful, inappropriate behaviour, defiant or avoiding work, the RTP Facilitators will refer the student to one of the Heads of School (HoS):

- Mr Jakins (Head of Primary School)
- Miss Grounds (Head of Secondary College)
- Mr Elvery (Middle School)
- Mrs Wallis (Senior School)
- Mr Justin Crawford (Social Worker)

Students may still visit the RTC as part of the requirements issued by the Heads of School. If a student is referred to the RTC and the student fails to comply with the responsible thinking process or continues to disrupt, the relevant HoS will normally suspend the student as necessary.

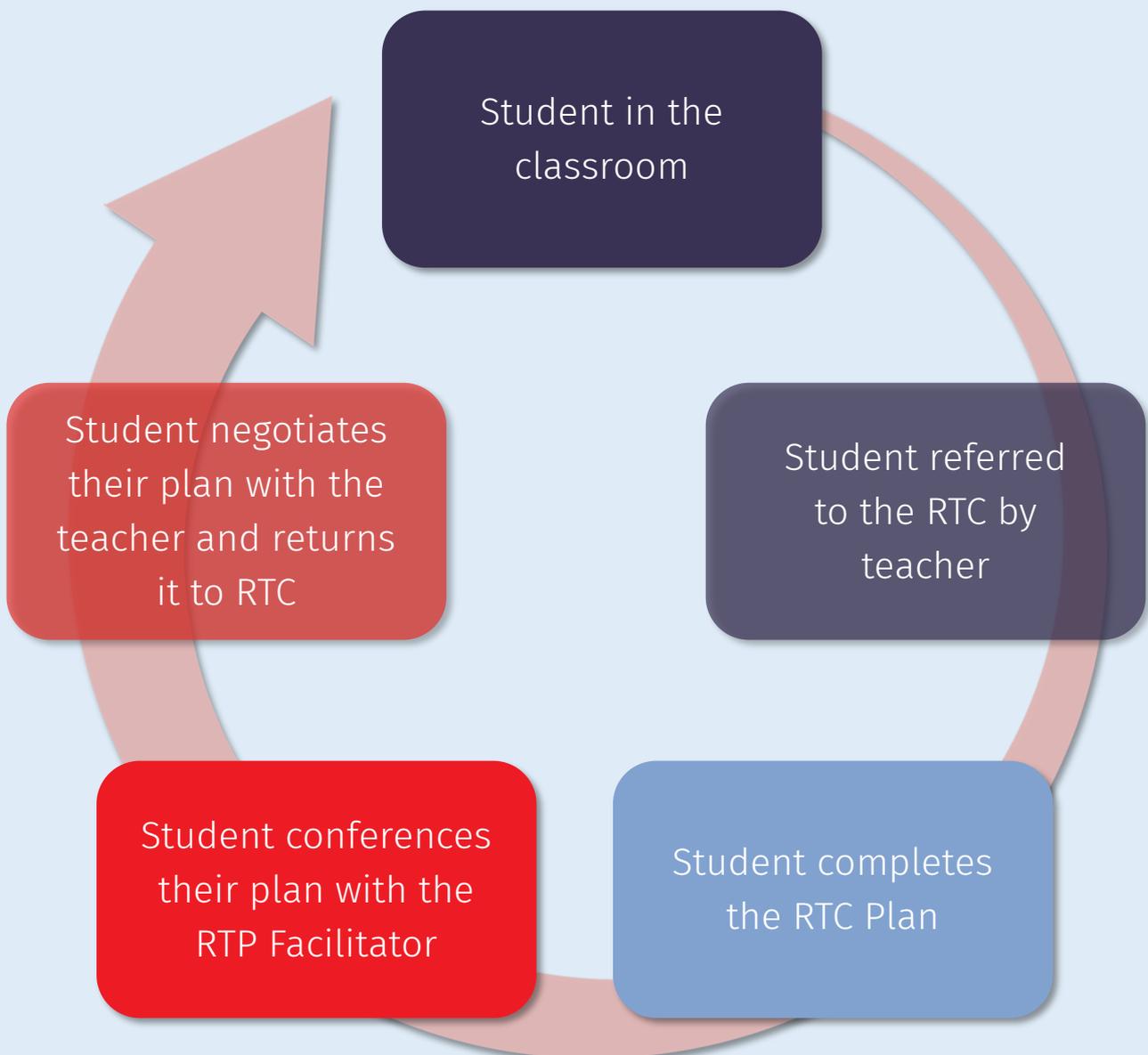
HOME COMMUNICATION

All RTC or HoS referrals will be communicated via email, phone or in person to parents. Our preferred method of home communication is via email. We encourage you to keep your personal details updated via student services and check your email on a regular basis. It is not always possible to express in writing the full and at times lengthy explanation connected to RTC visits. If you require additional information we encourage you to contact the [referring teacher](#).



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RTP Cycle

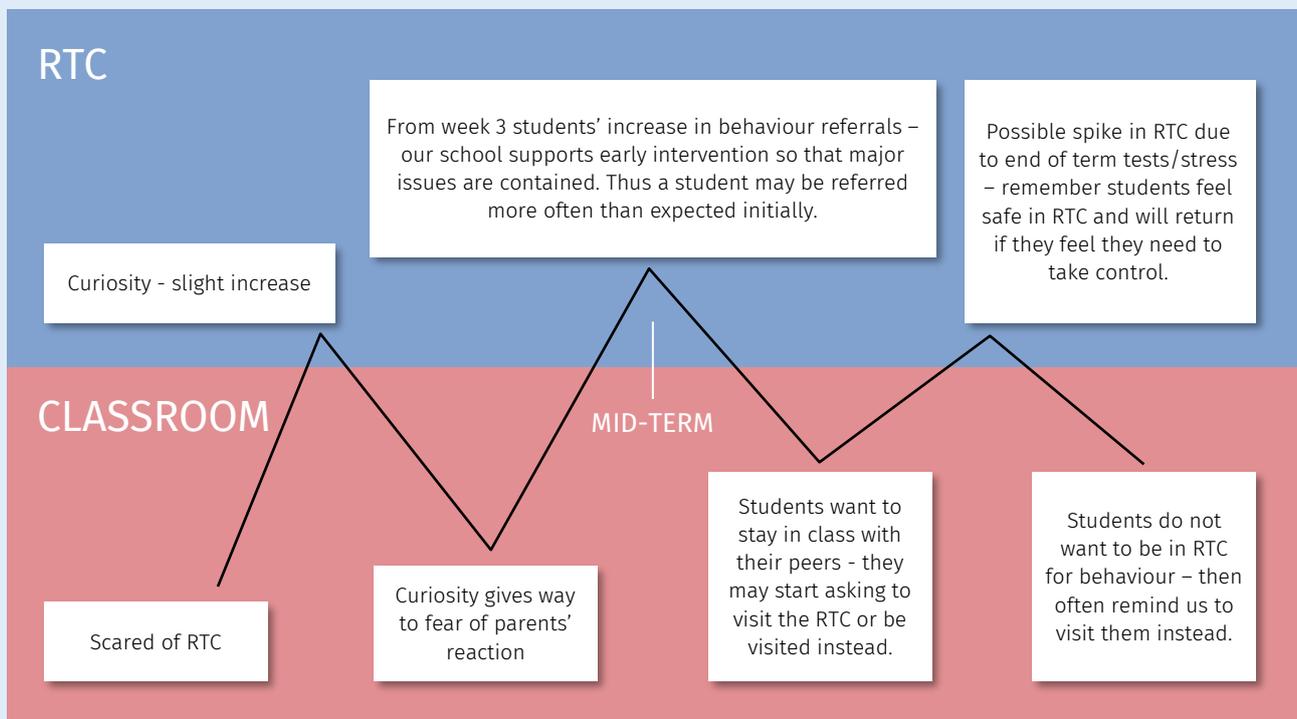


The responsible thinking process is more successful when the full cycle is completed; thus there should be no breaks in the cycle. Please help the student by making sure that every time you initiate the RTP Cycle that it is brought to completion.



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New Students General Experience of RTC during their first term at Parklands



OUR OBSERVATIONS

1. First students are scared of RTC – the place and people are unfamiliar and parents have sometimes told their child negative things or threatened them about going to the RTC.
2. Inevitably students become curious about RTC – Students witness other classmates coming and going from RTC, the staff become familiar in the classroom and the students always return smiling. This is usually enough to peak curiosity and children sometimes creates an opportunity to visit the RTC. When we notice this occurring we talk to the students about our visits to the classroom; we make a point of saying hello to all students in the room and create opportunities for students to demystify the process without encouraging students to try and create reasons to attend.
3. Love it – they like the colours, the feeling of safety, the friendly faces. It is very common for students to enjoy going to RTC; parents can find this very confusing and difficult to accept, but it is a GOOD thing!! We are aware that this is one of the stages that students move through, they get comfortable with us and feel safe. However, our goal is for students to want to be in the classroom learning and we are focussed on redirecting their attention back to this goal. As students get comfortable with their teachers and experience feeling valued, students redirect their focus to being in the classroom with their friends and teacher.



4. Week 3 of any term is always a very difficult one for Prep staff; week 4 is a very difficult for staff in RTC. During the first two weeks of the term students are acquainting themselves with one another, settling in and finding their boundaries. Once this stage is complete students typically try to push against the boundaries to see how flexible they are. During week 3 students push and the teachers maintain the classroom boundaries. By week 4 the teachers need more support and call for reinforcements (RTC). The RTP Facilitators pick up the behaviour support role intensely in the prep area from week 3-4 onwards and support the teachers in maintaining their classroom boundaries. Each term the length of time it takes for the class to settle into the classroom routine after this three week settling period reduces.

Characteristics specific to Week 3 (15 days) of Term 1

- Students start feeling safe and confident in the Prep area. This can result in students inappropriately using school equipment, no longer sitting still or at their desk, talking out of turn and other behaviours appear negative but actually suggest they are feeling safe and are adjusting to the new environment well.
 - Students start learning each other's names, personalities, the school rules and the phrase "Stop! I don't like it" – as a result students are more vocal about grievances between each other and can describe incidents in more detail and referrals spike as students seek to fulfil their individual sense of justice. Remember young students have not yet learned that they are only responsible for their own actions – often this means that the child 'being hit' was also the child who hit first. Retaliation is a common prep and year 1 occurrence as it takes time for us to teach students the skill of walking away, informing an adult and keeping their own hands and feet to themselves.
 - RTC increase - This can be a shock for many parents whose child has been 'perfect' up until now. This phenomenon is nothing to fear, once students get to know one another it is normal and healthy for their personalities to emerge and group formation begins (this can be both fun and challenging for students). It is common during this stage for students to attempt to get what they want by violating the rights of others such as hitting, snatching, biting/spitting, saying mean words, tantruming etc.
 - Sometimes what students want is to feel safe themselves and therefore act out so as to attend RTC (remember RTC is a safe place), this may occur especially if a student is having difficulty making friendships or is overly comfortable with adults.
 - RTP Facilitators is very aware of the various reasons students attend RTC and work individually with each student to help them navigate the school environment, friendship development and other issues causing them to feel unsafe so that the student can refocus their attention back onto being present in the classroom and learning.
5. Students who frequent RTC tend to decide about mid-term that they want to be in class (not RTC). We are constantly redirecting their focus to learning and being with their peers; some students take longer than others to want to be at school let alone learn.
6. Students may experience small spike in RTC attendance as the end of term gets closer. This is usually a result of stress in the classroom due to stress which may be related to the child due to testing or peer group fractions as students need a break from each other, the parents and home life stresses or the teacher's countenance as they are under pressure to finalise curriculum, testing and reports. If a child feels they are in a stressful environment they will seek a calm safe environment, the RTC is such a place.
7. Once the student feels safe or equipped with an action plan they usually prefer to be in the classroom regardless of the environment. Students will often come and inform us how they are going when we visit the classrooms and request subsequent visits.
8. By the end of term 1 most students have experienced the RTC for one reason or another and only a few require ongoing intensive support from RTP Facilitators as they continue learning the school rules.
- ◆ Girls are more likely to start/spike in their attendance near the end of term 1 or even during term 2 as it may take longer for them to express themselves. Girls go through the same steps as above scared, curious, love it, and then refocus on wanting to be in class.
 - ◆ Many girls don't start their RTC journey until the end of year 2 or even into year 3 as developmentally this is where a dramatic change in girl behaviour occurs and they are observed to be involved in increasing friendship conflicts, argue with each other and staff and socialize more (talking in class).



THE MOST IMPORTANT OBSERVATION OF ALL:

Regardless of the student's age upon the first visit to RTC it is not unusual for students to demonstrate fear and sadness about attending the RTC simply because it is new. However this fear should subside quickly as students move through the different stages of engaging with RTP staff.

In circumstances where fear is not subsiding, or is even increasing it is usually a result of how parents are responding to their child's referrals. Parents who respond negatively with anger and punishment usually create a memory trigger in their child that is re-established each time they are referred. It is also common that students who are focused on 'not going to RTC' will actually demonstrate a consistent pattern of attendance with little or very slow improvement.

It is more beneficial to the student and the parent to create a memory of positive experience. This means that rather than responding with anger, encourage your child to talk about what they have learnt in the RTC. At first the prep child may use phrases like "there is lego" or "we drew pictures"; or an older child might say "I did a plan" or "Miss spoke to me". Prompt your child to tell you about the picture/plan and refer to the home communication you received for the details. Remember if the child is afraid their memory will be compromised and they may not be able to tell you why they were referred. This is not ideal as we want children to remember why they were referred to the RTC and what they will plan to do in future incidents. We also want students to feel safe telling you about all aspects of their schooling including the positive and the areas that need improvement.

Another excellent tool for parents to develop is learning the 4 school rules. That way when you are talking to your child you can use the same wording that we use to remind them of the school expectations. We would love for your child learn to that whilst you feel 'sad or disappointed' that they disrupted the class, you are very proud that they used the RTC to make a plan for the next day.

In short, fear blocks the learning process and results in little change in a child. Students who experience ongoing fear of their parents' reactions take a very long time to learn to be responsible for themselves. This is because we have to first teach the student that they are not responsible for their parents' actions/reactions and since we cannot change these actions/reactions we have to have a plan to manage them (before making a plan to manage the specific behaviour). Only once the student feels that they can manage their parents' reactions are they ready to engage in the RTC process. This is an extremely difficult concept for young children to learn, but we do have many students at school who have accomplished this and still utilise the support of RTC to redirect their choices regardless of how their parents will react.



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Fearless Learning

The Responsible Thinking Classroom (RTC) is designed to implement a Process (RTP) which teaches children and adults how to implement effective problem solving skills in order to achieve what they want without violating the rights of others. These skills can then be applied to a range of circumstances which in addition to classroom behaviour include managing sibling or peer disputes, parent-child disagreements, learning about and using key aspects of our personalities well, planning future academic success... and the list goes on!! One of the strategies that we use to assist students remember this Process is **Planning**. The plan acts as a guide to students and adults to assist them develop the cognitive process of independent responsible thinking.

A child or adult's ability to develop the skills required for independent responsible thinking can become disrupted. One of the key disruptions we see in the RTC is fear.

Occasionally we have students who despite having previous RTC experiences begin demonstrating heightened fear responses such as crying, lying or anger. When we speak with these students we usually learn one of two root causes for the child's fear. First, fear of a parent's negative reaction or second, fear of punishment. These fear responses, if mild, do not necessarily act as a disruption. However, if a child becomes fixated on the punishment or parents reaction, demonstrates uncontrollable sobbing, or is even demonstrating fearful responses to the idea of RTC when they are simply being reminded of the classroom rules then it is highly likely that the fear is unhealthy and impacting on the child's ability to focus on learning responsible thinking skills.

It is common for a student who is fearful of attending RTC to remember feeling afraid, their response such as crying, and their parent's response such as disappointment or punishment. What we also notice is that fear-disrupted students are usually unable to remember why they were referred or what they learnt about managing future similar incidents. This response is identical from the littlies in prep to year 12 students and reflects the findings of the California Science Centre (N.D) which suggests that stress hormones make it easier to recall memories of emotional experiences.

Scientific studies have shown that heightened stress can "impair the development of the prefrontal cortex, the brain region that is critical for the emergence of executive functions including making, altering and following plans; controlling and focusing attention, inhibiting impulsive behaviours and developing the ability to hold and incorporate new information in decision making (National Scientific Council on the Developing Child, 2010)." Clearly these skills are integral to the development of independent responsible thinkers and should be cultivated from childhood right through to adulthood.

RTC is designed purposefully to be a safe place for students. It is common for students to demonstrate a mild fear response the first time they are referred to the RTC. Aware of this response the RTP Facilitators take special care of first-time students to help them have a positive RTC experience and memory. However equally important to our response is the parent's response as this is the final stage of the process and the last memory the child will formulate in regards to their memory of the people, place and their interpretation of the experience.

This year we are aiming to irradiate fear responses in all students towards learning Responsible Thinking. So how can you help? Adults play a huge role in creating or reducing fear responses in children, a key reason for this is that children often develop fears by watching their parent's own fearful reactions. You can help your child minimise their fear responses by following these simple ideas suggested by the California Science Centre (N.D.).



Parent's guide to childhood fear	How to apply this to RTC related fear
Talk to your child about their fears. Remember that to them, these fears are very real and serious	If your child is afraid of going to RTC talk to them about why they are fearful, was it a specific experience, a reaction, feelings such as embarrassment or disappointment? What role are you playing in this fear memory?
Help children prepare for future exposure	Talk positively to your child about what the RTC room looks like, the importance of writing a plan, the skills they will develop, the people they will meet.
Don't allow children to avoid their fears completely as this can aid in worsening their fear	Encourage children to view RTC as a place to learn new skills which is exciting rather than asking them to avoid going to the RTC. If students avoid the RTC they will not only will they become more fearful but they will miss out on learning invaluable social skills.
Share with your child positive strategies you use to overcome your own fears rather than imposing your own fears on them.	If you believe RTC is a bad place or if you use RTC as a punishment your child is likely to view it the same way. However if you share how you use skills such as reflecting on how actions impact on others, how to plan future responses and how to talk calmly about problems your child will begin to utilise these strategies themselves.

Finally what type of memory do you want your child to recall in the future when they are faced with problems?

- a) A positive memory which can recall the behaviour which needs change, their goal and the steps they will take to reach their goal.
- b) A negative memory that they felt afraid and their reaction such as crying, hiding or lying in response to perceived potential emotional pain?

In RTC we celebrate every opportunity for students and adults to become familiar with using responsible thinking. Why? Because our goal is for every student to graduate year 12 with the independent responsible thinking skills they need to navigate relationships, work places and life challenges.



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Tips to use RTP @ home

TIP # 1 ROLE MODELLING

Children copy behaviour they observe. Do you use encouraging words? How do you respond when you feel angry or excited? Do you hear yourself using ultimatums or excuses? Do you take responsibility for your choices regardless of the other person involved? Do you listen or interrupt conversations? Do you respond with negative words or action? Do you call out to your partner or children from another room? Spend this week noticing the way you interact with people in your life and consider whether your child is mimicking learnt behaviour – if necessary take some time to consider what different choices you will make in the future.

Example: Consider a family where a child hits their brother, the parent then takes the child's hand and smacks it explaining 'we don't hit people'. What does the child learn from this example?

Alternative: When a child hits their brother, the parent takes the child aside and asks 'what were you doing?' 'what are our family rules?' 'what happens if you are unsafe?' At this point there might be a consequence applied. This is a good opportunity for the parent to take a minute to think about what consequence to use and how they will explain the consequence to their child.

TIP #2 LOGICAL CONSEQUENCES

A consequence is a non-emotive logical response as a result of an unwanted behaviour. By using the responsible thinking process one is able to remove any anger or insult from the situation and calmly apply the process to help the student to redirect the way they think in order to choose different consequences (positive or negative) in the future.

Example: "If you don't go to the RTC today I will take you to see a movie."

Reward or punishments are generally given as an emotional reaction to stimulate a certain behaviour. The way in which we word or explain why we reward or punish generally sound like a threat or bribe 'you will get a lolly' or 'I will ban you.' Students who are aware that their behaviour will result in a reward or punishment are often distracted by this and are therefore restricted from learning and making long term positive behaviour changes due to this preoccupation.

Alternative: When the parent picks the child up from school allow the child an opportunity to explain the choice they made that resulted in them going to the RTC and the plan that they made. Take some time to celebrate the great ideas that they have come up with. Next, take time to consider how you will word/explain the consequence of not going to the movies. You may say 'I am very happy that your goal tomorrow is to 'say kind words, today however I am going to help you remember your goal so we won't be going to the movies tonight'.

Follow up: On another unrelated day, when you hear positive feedback about your child's positive behaviour choices celebrate this milestone with by surprising them and going to the movies. Tell them 'I heard you used kind words today, I felt very proud and thought tonight would be a great night to celebrate the good choices you made.' This type of consequence is not a reward that the child has been bribed/threatened with as it is unexpected and unpredictable.

Note: Children who know they will be rewarded for 'not going to the RTC' are often distraught when they get a referral. It never comes as a surprise to us when a student who has been threatened with a reward or punishment doesn't meet the standard set, why? Because the child has spent the day using their brain power to focus on the reward rather than focusing on their goal which should be 'listening to the teacher, doing their work, being quiet etc.' Thus



when the child comes to RTC, usually in tears they are unable to engage in the responsible thinking process due to being distracted by the 'reward' or 'punishment'. This type of distraction can have an adverse impact on the child's academic engagement; consider, if they not concentrating on 'listening to the teacher' they are probably not concentrating on the new concepts the teacher is teaching them.

By using the responsible thinking process we aim to focus the child's brain power on the behaviours we want them to learn. These behaviours then refocus the child academically and allow them to make positive choices about their own learning goals

TIP #3 WORDING

If you choose to have consequences at home the wording used to explain why the consequence is being applied is very important. The key is to focus the wording on the positive behaviour rather than the consequence. This is specifically important when referring to the responsible thinking process, students who are constantly encouraged to think of RTC as a negative environment are more likely to be fearful and shut down when they are referred. Fear equally results in the student being unable to focus on the new skills being taught. In short, fear may motivate a response, but seldom does it motivate long term positive change.

Example: "I am disappointed that you went to the RTC today, now you will have to sit in your room for the afternoon".

Alternative: "This afternoon you need to sit in your room because you chose to call out in class. I am pleased however that you did an excellent job in the RTC coming up with a plan for tomorrow, I look forward to hearing how you went."

TIP #4 EMOTIONS

One of the goals of using the responsible thinking process is to remove the negative emotional response from the situation. This means that the teacher is able to calmly question the child, redirect their focus and if necessary refer the student to RTC. When the student returns to class they know that they are going back into a supportive and safe learning environment.

Interestingly, many parents find it difficult to equally separate their emotional response when they learn of their child's referral. Take some time to ponder whether you react emotionally or proactively have a plan to reinforce future positive behaviour choices. Many parents have shared with us that they feel responsible for their child's behaviour; this is not true. Yes children do copy behaviour and it is important as adults to use the responsible thinking process to constantly reflect on our own behaviour. However, at the end of the day each person is only responsible for themselves. Your child is on a journey of growth and maturity; our role in the RTC is to guide them on this journey for the 12 years that you entrust them into our care. Every student will learn these responsible thinking concepts at a different pace and point in their life – we ask that you celebrate the tiny steps forward (even if at first it is making great choices in class and therefore only going to the RTC once instead of twice a day) and remove as many distractions from your child's academic and emotional/social learning as possible.

TIP #5 QUESTION, QUESTION, QUESTION

The key ingredients to a quality conversation are

1. Questioning and
2. Actively Listening – allowing your child to share their thoughts

Parent: how was your day?

Student: good

Parent: did you make good choices today?

Student: I called out in class and had to go to the RTC

Parent: what were you learning in class?

Student: ancient Egypt

Parent: how did calling out effect the class?

Student: the teacher had to stop the game we were playing



Parent: how did you feel about that?

Student: *bad, it was fun*

Parent: did you come up with a plan for next time?

Student: *yeah, I am going to try to remember to put my hand up. Mrs B suggested that I write the answers down in my note book plus I asked Johnny to sit next to me and remind me of my goal.*

Parent: what is your goal?

Student: *to put my hand up and wait for the teacher to talk to me*

Parent: that is an excellent goal.

The following afternoon

Parent: how did you go with your goal today?

Student: *good*

Parent: how did you feel?

Student: *the class got to play the game again and it was really fun.*

Parent: well done, I am sure it was not easy

Student: *no but Mrs B told me she was impressed.*

Parent: that's so good to hear, good job.

TIP #6 RESPONSIBILITY

Taking responsibility doesn't come naturally for many people; this is true both for adults and children alike. We tend to want to focus the attention on other people's behaviour in an attempt to take the attention off of our own. In breaking from this mould the responsible thinking process specifically teaches children to focus on what they were responsible for during the incident.

This task is equally difficult and important for parents as well. When speaking with the student or even other adults about incidents that occur at school does your language reflect the principle of taking responsibility or do you notice yourself shifting the blame?

We understand that many incidents occur as a result of retaliation; when we work alongside a child we take the context of the incident into account. However, even a child who hit in retaliation is responsible for their own actions. Thus when speaking with a child we help them to focus their ownership and plan development on their own actions and behaviour choices for the future.

Example: Parent phones RTC "why is my child going to RTC for hitting when I saw Joe Blogs hitting someone before school and he didn't get sent". RTC response would include 1. We are unable to discuss other student's or their referrals; 2. RTC is about taking responsibility for one's self, thus we spoke to your child ONLY about their own choices and actions; specifically focusing on what they can do in the future if someone upsets them.

ALTERNATIVE: Parent received RTC email. Parent picks up their child after school and uses Tip #5 to discuss incident. Each morning parent reminds child of their goal and their own responsibility as a student at Parklands to "be safe and keep others safe."

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.

If you choose to apply some or all of these tips I encourage you to set yourself at least a month to work towards your goal. Using these techniques may not come naturally or easily at first so please don't be too hard on yourself if you make a mistake. Keep trying, review these tips as often as you need and you are welcome to come in and speak with any of the RTP Facilitators if you would like further ideas or explanations.

Lastly, we would love to hear any examples of how you have implemented any of these tips at home.



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RTC Questions & Answers FOR 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?
 - I can respect the right of others to learn
 - I can be safe and keep others safe
 - I am prepared for class and ready to learn
 - 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

Social Worker: Justin Crawford - jcrawford@parklands.qld.edu.au

Uniform Notes: uniformpass@parklands.qld.edu.au



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RTC Questions & Answers FOR SECONDARY FAMILIES

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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.

Why might my student be referred to the RTC?

The Responsible Thinking Classroom (RTC) has three distinct purposes including behaviour referrals, uniform passes and incomplete class work, assignments, homework and unprepared or late for class.

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. Additional behaviour 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 a Head of School.

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.



2. The RTP Facilitator team does not discuss a child's referral process with anyone other than the direct family, therefore it may feel like your child is being referred often, but in reality they have a normal referral rate.
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 e-mail or in-person discussions in order to support your child and yourself.

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.

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 too. 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.

Common Uniform Pass Questions

Why did my child have to go to RTC for not having correct uniform?

Every student who is not in complete school uniform is required to attend the RTC before 8.30am to attain a "green uniform pass". This is not considered a RTC referral; it is simply the **location** the college provides for students to register uniform discrepancies.

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

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

My child won't wear the correct uniform; can you please punish them at school?

The Staff at PCC expect that parents are responsible for ensuring that their child is in full academic or sport uniform before they leave home. Since RTC is a non-punitive process the RTC will not be responsible for punishing your child for a home-based responsibility. We will assist by ensuring that parents are informed about their child's uniform issues at all times. Consistent disregard of the Uniform Policy by a child may result in them speaking with a Head of School.

Common home/classwork, assignment and failed grade questions (secondary only)

My child says that they have already completed the work!

If you believe that you received a home communication email on behalf of a teacher by mistake, or wish for additional information about the task please contact the referring teacher (not the RTC). The referring teacher will be able to specify if the student is required to complete additional work, handed the work in late or simply didn't hand it in at all.

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 as we send letters relating to so many different areas 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?

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Whilst we perceive RTC as a positive learning tool for all students, now 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.

Who should I contact?

RTC or RTP Questions – contact an RTP Facilitator
Specific Behaviour Information – contact the referring teacher
Uniform Pass Information – uniformpass@parklands.qld.edu.au
Incomplete work – contact the referring teacher

How can I support the responsible thinking process from home?

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Wellbeing and Reporting an Incident

The Parkland's values of Christlikeness, Learning, Excellence, Attitude and Respect lead us to have the desire to be looking after the wellbeing of our students. The Student Care and Wellbeing team are there to provide the support, encouragement, gentleness, challenge and love that is required for our students to have a good and healthy wellbeing.

We do this in many different ways through programs, courses for parents, presentations, class room visits, individual sessions and referrals to outside services. We want the students to get the best information and understanding on the topics that affect them. Topics such as grief and loss, resilience, interacting with friends, dealing with circumstances of life, working with difficult people, showing honour, being a powerful person, demonstrating loving on purpose and dealing with conflict. These are normal life issues that we face and getting support and learning through these is the best way to be a powerful person.

We know that there will be times when there is conflict at school between people especially in the playground. Energy is high, competitive natures and differing opinions come out through the playing of sports and games in the breaks. It is good and healthy to have manageable levels of conflict in our lives. As children grow they require the conflict to be able to teach them new skills and understandings in working with people. This is healthy growth, but through this conflict (as we all know through our own experiences) people sometimes make mistakes and do not deal with conflict appropriately. So they need help to be able to learn the skills in respectfully dealing with conflict.

Knowing this, the Student Care and Wellbeing team is the safe place for students to come and learn from this conflict and the mistakes that they have made in their interactions with others. We encourage our students to inform us about an incident that may have occurred in the playground, so that all involved can get the appropriate support for their wellbeing and learning.

STUDENT CARE AND WELLBEING

The Student Care and Wellbeing Team Mission:

Is to free, connect and honour the Parklands community through coaching and love.

Some of the support on offer:

- Strength and Shine – Yr 5 & 9
- Resilient ME+YOU
- Learning 4 Life
- Seasons – Grief and Loss
- LoKoP – Parental Course
- Masterclass – Parent's Workshops
- Friendships Skills Master Classes – student sessions
- Individual Wellbeing Sessions – brief intervention
- Classroom visits
- Presentations
- Allied Health referrals
- Parent Resource Library
- Mentoring
- Operation Snippet



The process for reporting an incident:

1. Student or teacher informs the Student Care and Wellbeing team that an incident has occurred. This is best done ASAP after the incident. The longer the time frame is between an incident and us finding out about it, the harder it is for quick, positive resolution.
2. Student Care and Wellbeing team will request student/s to complete incident report (where appropriate)
3. Support is given to the student/s involved in the incident and their physical and emotional wellbeing addressed.
4. In every circumstance where an incident is reported, a thorough investigation is completed. This includes speaking with the student/s involved, any witnesses and the referring teacher.
5. The outcome of the investigation is reported to a Head of School.
6. The student/s are then provided the opportunity to work on a resolution. This may include completing a Responsible Thinking Plan, an apology letter, a support session with a social worker, referral to friendship skills masterclass conflict resolution program, a Head of School discussion or referrals to external support services.

We appreciate your understanding of the college privacy restrictions which mean that we are not able to discuss with you the outcomes related to other students. This also means that your child's involvement or information is protected from being discussed with others. We will however, advise you if there are any outcomes or actions relating to your child.

Please find the link to the policies relating to this topic –

<https://parklands.qld.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/3.60-Policy-Student-Bullying.pdf>

<https://parklands.qld.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/3.22-Policy-Dispute-Resolution.pdf>

Our values and tools of supporting students lead to positive resolutions of conflict. Through this process there are skills to learn for all the students involved. Skills that take repetition and time to learn. Yes, healthy resolution and communication through conflict feels like hard work. Every time they work through a conflict and learn from this experience with the appropriate support from the Student Care and Wellbeing team they are building the skills to be powerful people.

For some more great tips on the communication and dealing with conflict check out Danny Silk's Blog – Learning how to fight fair. <http://www.lovingonpurpose.com/blog/learning-how-to-fight-fair>

Parent Information

These websites are designed to provide parents with information about issues relating to young people, technology, and general parenting support.

Reach Out - <http://ie.reachout.com/parents/>

Information for parents relating to teenage issues, mental health and support strategies.

Parent Line - <http://www.parentline.com.au/>

Online or Phone support related to parenting and relationships

ESafety - <https://www.esafety.gov.au>

Online information for safe use of the internet for parents and young people.

Wellbeing hub - <https://studentwellbeinghub.edu.au>

Family and Child Connect - <http://www.familychildconnect.org.au/index.asp> Ph 133264

Family and child connect is a free service to help you with the challenges of parenthood. Services include assistance with child behaviour, relationship development, stopping violence at home, budgeting, addiction, housing and health care. Phone and in person support available.