

CASE STUDY: ASSAULT ON A CHILD IN THE CHESTER AREA

Background

Michael is aged 11 and lives local to the James. Michael was on his push scooter and as he went round the corner he almost collided with James.

James reacted by striking Michael on his shoulder, causing a red mark and swearing at him. Michael spoke to his parents as he was shook up by the incident.

Michael's mum informed the local PCSO who advised her of her options. She decided to pursue the Restorative Justice route. The police approached James; they logged the incident and informed him a referral would be placed with the Cheshire Restorative Justice & Mediation Hub.

The Process

The Police referred the case to the Cheshire Restorative Justice & Mediation Hub. The restorative justice practitioner arranged an assessment visit with Michael and his mum.

Michael was given the opportunity to explain his version of events. Michael's Mum described the impact on Michael – He was anxious at home in case James approached them, it had affected his sleep patterns and it was on his mind when he was trying to concentrate on his exams. Michael's Mum described concern for her son's mental health and also her disapproval at an adult striking a child and swearing at him.

We arranged an assessment visit with James, he explained his version of events and that he was concerned about police involvement and the effect on relations with his neighbour.

A face to face meeting was held, Michael agreed he may have been going a little fast on his scooter but the incident had affected him when he was already worried about his exams.

Mum explained her concern that there are lots of local children playing out so this type of incident could happen at any time. There is never an excuse for striking or swearing at a child.

James explained some of the domestic difficulties he was experiencing so he also had things on his mind that morning. When both explained their situation, Michael and James were happy to shake hands and gain closure. James presented Michael with a goody bag of sweets.

The referrers were informed about the meeting and that the case would be closed.

Feedback

Michael's mum described the restorative justice process as being 'very helpful' and that the experience had given her family 'resolution' and helped them 'move on'. She accepted everyone 'has bad days' and would recommend restorative justice to prevent 'anyone getting into serious trouble'.

James described restorative justice as 'being outside of my ordinary experience'. He stated he could now understand Michael's point of view more and he is now more aware of the volume of local children playing out. He would recommend restorative justice as a neutral intermediary.

**Please note – the names have been changes in the case study to protect the identities of the people involved in this case.*