

Structured conversations to support educators to challenge racism by children

Curriculum resource



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Key Principles for educators

1. **Stay Calm and Firm:** Model respectful and controlled behaviour while addressing the issue decisively.
2. **Be Clear and Direct:** Clearly explain why the behaviour is unacceptable. Avoid vague or minimising language.
3. **Prioritize Safety:** Ensure the affected student feels supported and safe.
4. **Follow-Up:** Address the issue with both pupils involved after class and involve school policies or leadership if needed.
5. **Reinforce Positive Values:** Use the moment as an opportunity to teach empathy, kindness, and acceptance.

Step	Script/Action	Notes
1. Immediate Response	<i>[Calm but firm tone]</i> "Stop right there. What you just said/did is not okay. We need to talk about this because racism or any form of disrespect is never acceptable in our school or anywhere else."	Ensure tone is calm but assertive to de-escalate tensions and establish boundaries.
2. Address the Student (Public)	<i>If appropriate to address publicly:</i> "Using words or actions that disrespect someone because of their skin colour, culture, or background is hurtful and wrong. Let's take a moment to think about why that might make someone feel upset or excluded." <i>If unintentional or minor:</i> "Even if you didn't mean to hurt anyone, words like that carry a history of making people feel unequal or unwelcome. That's why we don't use them."	Use age-appropriate language, ensuring the student understands the impact of their behaviour.
3. Address the Class	<i>Optional, if the situation allows for a learning moment:</i> "I want to remind everyone that in this classroom and school, we value respect and kindness above all else. Racism means treating someone unfairly or saying hurtful things because of their race, skin colour, or background. That kind of behaviour can cause deep harm, and it's something we take very seriously."	Reinforces classroom values of inclusion and respect without singling anyone out unnecessarily.
4. Support the Affected Student	<i>Publicly (if appropriate):</i> "[Student's Name], I'm really sorry this happened. I want you to know that you are respected and valued here." <i>Privately:</i> "I'm here to support you and make sure this doesn't happen again. If you'd like to talk more about how you're feeling, we can do that privately after this lesson."	Show empathy and validate their feelings, ensuring they feel safe and respected.

Step	Script/Action	Notes
5. Redirect the Class	"Let's refocus and continue with our lesson. Remember, this classroom is a space where everyone deserves to feel safe and respected."	Transition smoothly back to the lesson to maintain order and the learning environment.
6. Follow-Up: With the Student Who Made the Comment or Act	<i>Privately:</i> "I want to talk about what happened earlier. Do you understand why what you said/did was wrong and hurtful? Let's think together about how we can make sure this doesn't happen again."	Encourage reflection, accountability, and learning. Offer guidance on making amends.
7. Follow-Up: With the Affected Student	<i>Privately:</i> "I want to check in with you about what happened earlier. How are you feeling? I want you to know that I'm here to support you and make sure this doesn't happen again. If there's anything you need, please let me know."	Provide emotional support and reassurance that the incident is being addressed.
8. Optional Class Follow-Up	Plan a discussion or lesson on respect, diversity, and inclusion. Examples include: - Reading a book about diversity.- Discussing the importance of kind words.- Creating a class kindness pledge.	Reinforce positive values and create a more inclusive classroom environment.