

Scripted conversations about racist incidents with parents

Curriculum resource



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If the Child is the perpetrator of Racism

Casual Racist Remark (Primary School)

Context: *A Year 4 student called another student a racist nickname based on their skin colour.*

Educator: “Thanks for meeting with me today. I want to speak with you about something serious that happened in class yesterday involving [Child’s Name].”

Parent: “Okay... what happened?”

Educator: “During a group activity, [Child’s Name] referred to another student using a nickname that relates to their skin colour. While it may not have been meant to cause harm, the words used were racist and hurtful. We’ve spoken with your child about it, and they were surprised to learn the impact of their words.”

Parent: “Oh, I’m shocked. They didn’t mean anything by it.”

Educator: “I appreciate that they may not have intended harm, and at this age, children often repeat things without understanding the full meaning. But it’s still important that we help them understand how words can hurt and reinforce stereotypes. We want to support [Child’s Name] to grow and learn from this.”

Parent: “Of course. What happens next?”

Educator: “We’ve already had a restorative conversation in class to help repair the harm. What would really help now is reinforcing this message at home. I can share some child-friendly resources that might spark a helpful conversation. Would that be okay?”

Parent: “Yes, please. I want to support however I can.”

Educator: “Thank you. We’re approaching this as a learning opportunity and will continue to support [Child’s Name] in understanding respect, inclusion and kindness.”

Racial Slur (Secondary School)

Context: *A Year 9 student used a racial slur during a football match.*

Educator: “Thanks for coming in today. I need to speak to you about an incident involving [Student’s Name] during the school football match.”

Parent: “Is everything okay?”

Educator: “Unfortunately, during the game, [Student’s Name] directed a racial slur at another player. It was heard by several students and staff. We take this very seriously—it caused harm and violated our school values.”

Parent: “I don’t know where he would have learned that. I’m sorry this happened.”

Educator: “Thank you for your honesty. We recognise that teenagers sometimes test boundaries, but part of our job is to help them understand the gravity of these choices and their consequences.”

Parent: “Will he be punished?”

Educator: “There is a formal consequence in line with our behaviour policy, and we’re also requiring him to take part in a learning reflection session. We’d like to work with you on a follow-up at home to reinforce the message. Would you be open to a joint conversation with our diversity lead?”

Parent: “Yes, I think that would be good.”

Educator: “We want to be clear—this isn’t just about punishment. It’s about understanding racism, the hurt it causes, and how we support young people to be actively respectful and inclusive. That’s how change happens.”

Repeated Microaggressions (Sixth Form)

Context: *A Sixth Form student repeatedly made jokes about a peer’s accent and cultural background, despite being asked to stop.*

Educator: “Thank you for joining this conversation. We’ve noticed an ongoing issue involving [Student’s Name] and repeated comments directed at a classmate.”

Parent: “What kind of comments?”

Educator: “They’ve made several jokes about the student’s accent and cultural background—both in class and online. Though framed as ‘banter,’ the comments have caused distress and discomfort. We’ve spoken to [Student’s Name] previously, but it’s continued.”

Parent: “He always jokes around. He doesn’t mean to be offensive.”

Educator: “We understand the intention may have been humour, but repeated comments that target someone’s identity—especially after being asked to stop—move into racism. Intent doesn’t undo the harm caused.”

Parent: “I see. I didn’t realise how serious this was.”

Educator: “We want [Student’s Name] to understand how ‘jokes’ can uphold harmful stereotypes and make peers feel unsafe. He’ll be engaging in a reflection project and peer-led dialogue group. We’d also like to invite you to review some resources together.”

Parent: “Yes, please. I want to make sure we’re addressing this properly.”

Educator: “That means a lot. We’re committed to supporting all students to grow in empathy, accountability and respect.”

If the Child is the target of Racism

Educator: “Thank you for making time to meet. I need to talk with you about something that happened at school today involving [Child’s Name].”

Parent: “Is everything alright?”

Educator: “[Child’s Name] experienced a racist incident during break time. Another pupil used a racial slur towards them. I want to start by saying how sorry I am that this happened, and that we are taking it very seriously.”

Parent: “What exactly was said?”

Educator: “A student called [Child’s Name] a [slur – say ‘racist term’ rather than repeating it]. This happened in front of a few others. We’ve spoken to [Child’s Name] privately, made sure they feel safe, and asked what they’d like to happen next. They were understandably upset.”

Parent: “I’m angry this happened. Has the other child been punished?”

Educator: “We’ve already spoken to the student involved and their parents. There will be appropriate consequences, and more importantly, they’ll be taking part in a restorative process and guided reflection to understand the harm caused. We’re not treating this as a one-off—this is part of our wider anti-racism commitment.”

Parent: “Thank you. What about [Child’s Name]? What support are you offering them?”

Educator: “We’ve offered a safe space and check-ins with our pastoral team. We’re also making sure [Child’s Name] knows they were not to blame and that their voice matters. Would you be happy for us to check in regularly with them over the next few weeks?”

Parent: “Yes, please. They can be quite quiet about things like this.”

Educator: “We completely understand. We’ll also follow up with you by email and share any steps we take as a school to address this more widely—so no child feels isolated or unsafe.”

Parent: “I appreciate you letting me know straight away and not brushing it under the carpet.”

Educator: “It’s vital we work in partnership, and we are committed to being transparent. Please don’t hesitate to contact us if there’s anything more we can do to support [Child’s Name] at home or school.”

Early Years / Foundation Stage (Ages 4–5)

Context: *A child said, "You can't play with us because your skin is brown."*

Educator: "Thank you for coming in. I need to speak with you about something that happened today involving [Child's Name]."

Parent: "What happened?"

Educator: "Another child told [Child's Name] they couldn't play because of their skin colour. This is a form of racial exclusion, and although they're very young, it's something we take seriously."

Parent: "Oh no. Are they okay?"

Educator: "They seemed confused and a little sad. We comforted them straight away and explained that what was said was not okay. We also had a gentle class discussion about kindness, difference, and including everyone."

Parent: "Thank you. That's upsetting to hear, but I'm glad you handled it."

Educator: "We're here to support [Child's Name] and to work with families to create an inclusive culture. Please let us know if you notice any changes in how they're feeling at home."

Primary (Ages 6–11)

Context: *A child was called a racist name in the playground.*

Educator: "Thanks for coming in. I want to speak with you about an incident involving [Child's Name] at lunch today."

Parent: "Is everything alright?"

Educator: "Another student used a racist word to describe [Child's Name] during a disagreement. It was overheard by others, and understandably, [Child's Name] was upset. I want you to know we took immediate action."

Parent: "That's really upsetting. Did you speak to [Child's Name] about it?"

Educator: "Yes. We spoke privately, gave reassurance, and explained they did nothing wrong. They were incredibly brave to speak up. The other child has been spoken to and will be taking part in a learning process and consequences aligned with our anti-racist approach."

Parent: "Thank you. Is there anything we should do at home?"

Educator: "You could ask [Child's Name] how they're feeling, and remind them they can talk to you and us any time. If you'd like, I can send you some books we use in school to support conversations about race and identity."

Secondary (Ages 11–16)

Context: *A student was called a racial slur during PE and it was posted about in a group chat.*

Educator: “Thanks for joining me today. I need to talk about an incident involving [Student’s Name] that we were made aware of after PE.”

Parent: “What happened?”

Educator: “During the lesson, another student used a racial slur towards [Student’s Name]. It was later shared as a ‘joke’ in a group chat. This is both racist and a breach of our school’s code of conduct. We’ve spoken to [Student’s Name] and taken immediate steps to support them.”

Parent: “This is unacceptable. How is [Student’s Name] doing?”

Educator: “They were upset but also very composed. We’ve made sure they have a trusted adult to talk to and have offered ongoing support. The students responsible are facing serious consequences and will be participating in anti-racism education and restorative work.”

Parent: “I’m glad action is being taken. But this kind of thing can have a lasting effect.”

Educator: “Absolutely. That’s why we’re following up regularly with [Student’s Name] and working with our safeguarding and pastoral team. If you’d like, we can also involve our counsellor or invite you to a joint session.”

Post-16 / Sixth Form (Ages 16–18)

Context: *A peer made repeated ‘jokes’ about a student’s African heritage, mocking their name and accent.*

Educator: “Thanks for meeting today. I want to talk with you about a repeated issue affecting [Student’s Name] in class.”

Parent: “They did mention something... is it bullying?”

Educator: “They’ve been on the receiving end of repeated comments from a peer—mocking their name and African background. [Student’s Name] has made it clear they want it to stop, but it’s continued. This is racism, and we take it very seriously.”

Parent: “I appreciate you acknowledging it. That kind of behaviour can be really damaging.”

Educator: “We agree. [Student’s Name] has shown a lot of strength in raising it. We’ve taken action with the student responsible, and [Student’s Name] has been offered regular check-ins and the opportunity to lead part of our inclusion work if they wish.”

Parent: “Thank you. How can I support them at home?”

Educator: “Keeping the conversation open and affirming their right to feel safe and respected is key. We can also share some resources and workshops if you’d find that useful.”