

CONFERENCE SCRIPT

1. Introduction:

Welcome. As you know, my name is _____, and I will be coordinating this conference. Before the conference begins, I would like to introduce everybody briefly and indicate their reasons for being here.

(Another version might look like this:

I want to thank everybody for being here today. Some of you are missing out on your lunchtime/meeting time/sport practice/time with your family/planning other school activities. Before we start I want to go around the group and explain why people are here today.)

The introductions are usually performed in order around the circle.

At this stage, I would like to thank you all for making the effort to attend. This is a difficult (and /or complicated/sensitive) matter, and your participation here will help us deal with it.

The conference will focus on the incident (.....) which happened (.....), involving (offender's and victim's names).

It's important to understand that we will focus on what (offender's name) did and how his/her behaviour has affected others. We are not here to decide whether (offender's name) is a good or bad person. We want to explore how people have been affected, and see whether we can begin to repair the harm that has been done.

To those responsible/s:

_____, you have admitted your involvement in the incident. If at any stage during the conference you no longer wish to participate, you are free to leave - but if you choose to do so, the matter will be dealt with differently. This matter will be finished when this conference is over and you have completed what people ask you to do to repair the harm. Is that clear?

(Alternatively:

You can leave the conference any time you like, but if you do you need to know that what you did will be handled differently by the school. Do you understand this?)

2. Telling the story:

Those responsible :

-to help us understand what harm has been done and who has been affected by this incident, could you start by telling us what happened?
- **How did you come to be involved?**
- **What were you thinking at the time?**

(Or

- *What made you decide to do that?*
- *How did you come to decide to do that?*
- *What was going on in your head at the time?*
- *What were you hoping would happen?*
- *What was the purpose of doing that?*
- *What were you expecting would happen?*
- *What were you wanting to happen?)*

- **What have you thought about since the incident?**

(Or

- *What have you thought about since this has all happened?)*
- **Who do you think has been affected by your actions?**
- **In what way?**

3. Exploring the harm

Those harmed (victims):

- **What did you think at the time?**
- **What have you thought about since?**
- **How has this incident affected you?**
- **How did your family and friends/colleagues/classmates react when they heard about the incident/when it happened?**
- **What has been the worst of it for you?**

or

- **What are the main issues here for you?**

Victim Supporters:

- **What did you think when you heard about the incident?**
- **How do you feel about what has happened?**
- **What has happened since?**

Or

- **What changes have you seen in your son/daughter?**

Or

- What changes have you seen in your colleague?”
- As’s parent/friend/colleague, what has been the hardest for you?
- What are the main issues here for you?

Wrongdoer supporters:

- This must be difficult for you to hear this?
- What did you think when you heard?
- How do you feel about what has happened?
- What has happened since?
- How has it affected you?
- How are things at home in the wake of this?

Or

- How are things now between you all?
- What’s been the worst of it?

4. Symbolic reparation:

Wrongdoer/s:

Before we move on, is there anything you want to say to..... (the victim), or anyone else here?

If necessary:

Is there something(victim, parents, teacher, etc), needs to hear from you right now?

5. Agreement:

To the victim and the victim supporters:

- What do you want to see happen as a result of the conference/meeting today (or to repair the harm/fix things for you – tailor the question to match their issues)?

Allow plenty of time for discussion as suggestions are tabled.

To wrongdoers and wrongdoer supporters:

- Does that seem fair?

It is also useful to ask the wrongdoer and his/her supporters for their ideas about how to make amends:

- **Is there something that you would like to see happen that might help?**

To all conference participants:

- **Who will be responsible for supervising the terms of the agreement?**

Let me just summarise what you have agreed upon.

You read the list of actions and get final agreement to commit it to paper.

6. Closing the conference:

To the whole group:

I will now record the agreement that's been reached here. This will formally close the matter, subject to completion of the agreement. You will each be asked to sign it and you will be given a copy before you leave.

Is there anything else anyone wants to say?

Leave a little time for people to compose their thoughts, then say.

You have all worked hard to resolve this incident and the agreement you have reached should go a long way towards repairing the harm that has been done.

While I write down the agreement, which I will ask you all to sign before you leave, please enjoy the refreshments we have provided for you.