

# Conflict Resolution

Conflict can arise through personal differences between individual pupils, problems which occur outside school life and are brought into school, or from difficulties arising from the breakdown of relationships between individuals or groups of pupils. This guide will provide you with the basic steps you can take to help pupils resolve conflict and develop the necessary skills to deal with difficulties which arise.

## 1. FORMULATE POLICY

When a school has a clear process for conflict resolution which is used by everyone, it helps pupils to learn the skills of dealing with conflict and to know what is expected when it does occur.



## 2. MANAGE EMOTIONS

Before any conflict is to be resolved, pupils need to access their executive functions such as thinking, listening and problem solving. This is not possible when their emotions are in charge. Help them to find the best way of calming down, and support them in this process if necessary.



## 3. ESTABLISH THE FACTS

Seek to gain the whole picture of what has happened from all parties so that the different perspectives are understood by all. This involves pupils actively listening to each other.

## 4. BUILD EMPATHY

If pupils understand their own feelings and those of others, it will begin to build empathy and an establishment of connection and reconnection between all those involved.

## 5. IDENTIFY RESPONSIBILITY

Where appropriate, it is important that pupils take responsibility for their actions and the consequences it has had for those involved. A good prompt for this might be 'Could you have done something differently to change what happened?'

## 6. DISCUSS SOLUTIONS

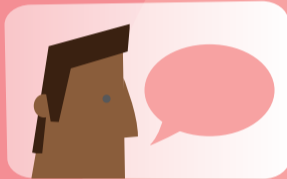
Share ideas and problem solve. Seek to reach agreement on the most suitable solution or solutions. This may need to be modelled by an adult to begin with.

## 7. BE CONSISTANT & PATIENT

Helping pupils learn the skill of conflict resolution takes time, particularly where strong emotions are involved, or pupils have not had good conflict resolution modelled before.

## 8. PRACTISE IN THE CLASSROOM

If pupils can learn skills such as calming down techniques, active listening, debating and problem solving during lessons away from actual conflict, the better they will be able to employ these skills when conflicts do arise and strong emotions run high.



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